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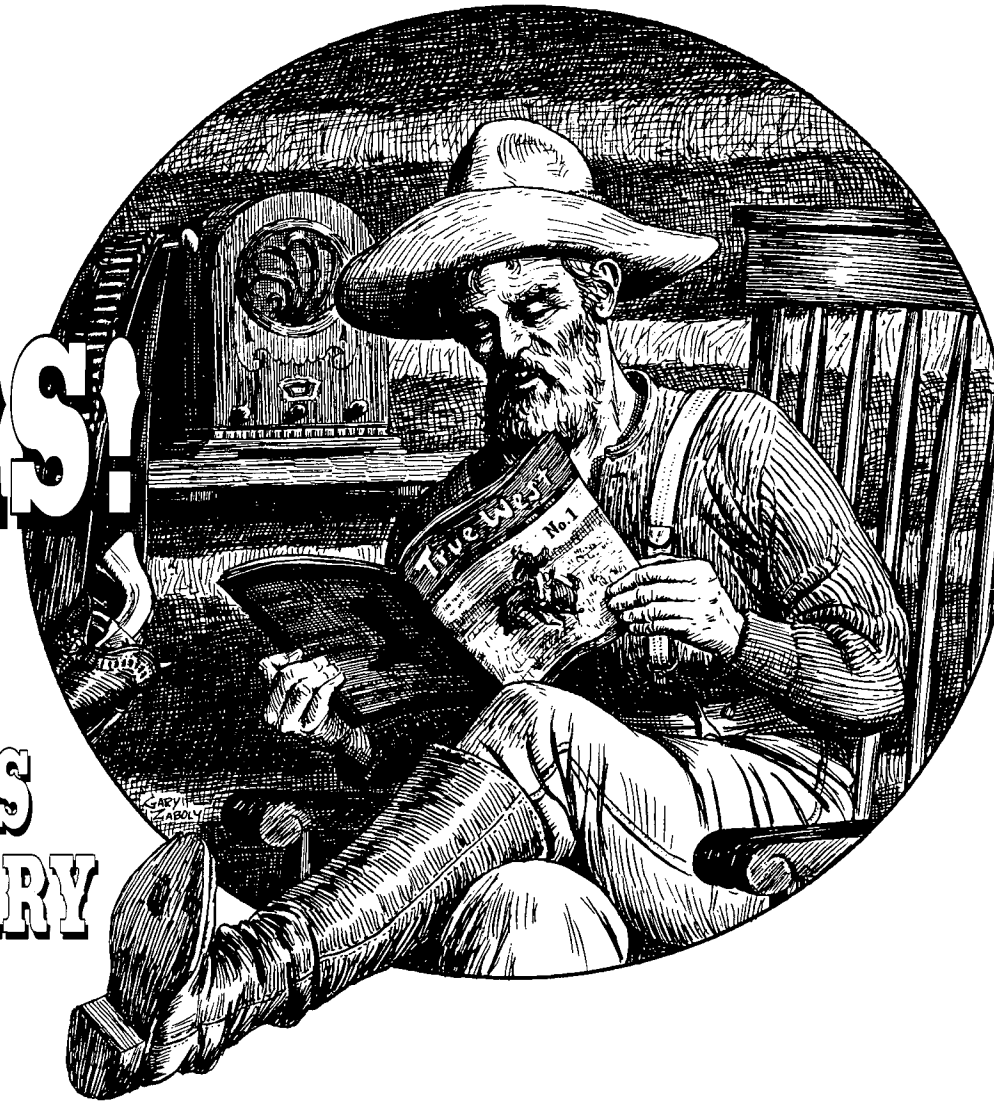


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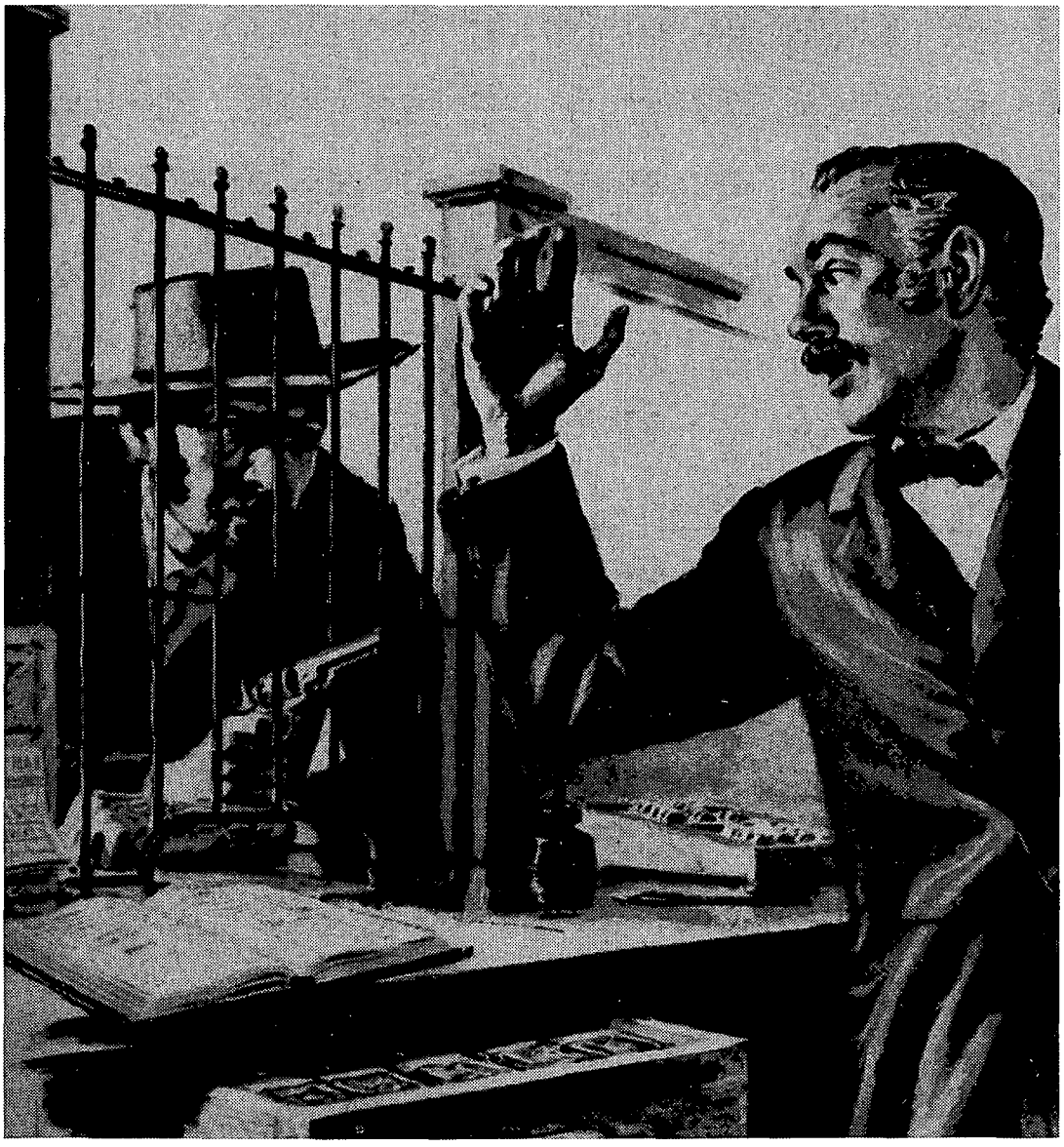

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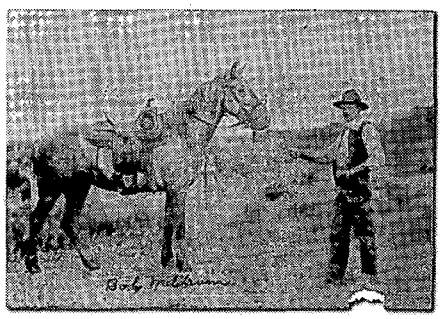
# TRUE WEST

May 1998
Vol. 45, No. 5
Whole No. 361


## Our Cover

*Burying the Cattle Money*
By Kim Mackey

Page 10



Page 15

Page 18

## FEATURES


10 **The Unsinkable Molly Brown.** *By Jan Holden.* Margaret Tobin Brown goes from a poor Irish family in Missouri, to the riches of Colorado's goldfields, and the infamy of the *Titantic.*

15 **The Fine Art of Murder.** *By Larry K. Brown.* Incarcerated for murder, ex-lawman and Tom Horn associate Bob Meldrum sketches life as he knows it: rough and bloody.

18 **Richard Franklin Tankersley: West Texas Frontiersman.** *By Barbara Barton.* New to Texas, Richard Tankersley quickly joins the Texas Minute Men to help protect settler families like his own.

24 **Piedmont and the Charcoal Kilns.** *By Jean A. Mathisen.* Born out of necessity, Piedmont, Wyoming, supplies much needed coal and railroad ties to the Union Pacific.

28 **The Dalton Gang's "Texas Jack."** *By Walt Mittelstaedt.* Not unlike John Dillinger a generation later, Dalton gang member Dick Broadwell received his mortal wounds in an alley at the age of thirty-one.

31 ***True West* Legends: John Selman.** *By Leon C. Metz.* The violent life and times of the man who killed the Dark Angel...John Wesley Hardin.

41 **Jim White: Cave Cowboy.** *By Peter Hildebrandt.* A shy, unassuming cowpoke becomes the first of over two million visitors to explore the Carlsbad Caverns.

45 **Klondike Remembered.** *By Mary Ellen Gilliland.* In a land where gold dust spilled on the floor and chocolate was kept in the safe, Hulda Nelson chronicled the Gold Rush in her childhood diary.


## Departments


3 FROM THE EDITOR
4 TRULY WESTERN
52 REVIEWS
59 WILD OLD DAYS
4 SADDLE PALS
6 FOOTNOTES
56 ANSWER MAN
62 CROSSWORD



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# FROM THE EDITOR

Howdy, ya'll!

Well, it's been a pretty quiet week here in Stillwater. It's still too cold yet to do any serious fishing, and since I don't give a cuss about the latest celebrity wedding or divorce, there's really been no reason to turn on the television.

So, to kill time between work and sleep I've been moseying around the Internet. I figure there must be around a gazillion folks just as bored as I am, at the same part of the day, somewhere on the same planet, and apparently, using the same phone line, 'cause everytime I try to "log on" I get stuck in one wicked log jam of cyber confusion.

Ultimately, after fighting off thoughts that there's something more useful I could be doing with my time, my computer starts talking to a whole slew of other computers and I'm free to go where the "Information Highway" will take me. It's usually one dead end after another, although the rest stops are pretty nice.

In an effort to convince myself that I wasn't just wasting time, I sat down this week and promised to leave the virtual bluegrass concerts and MAD magazine sites alone and go searching for all things western. Staring at a computer screen for hours makes a whole lot more sense if you convince yourself you're doing serious editorial research.

It turns out that there is a virtual ton of western material on the Internet. I started by searching for the Big Three: Billy, Jesse, and Wyatt. I got springwagon full of stuff on each of 'em. Some links were weaker than others, but some were exactly what I was looking for.

A few of the more interesting, if not helpful, places I found were the Billy the Kid Outlaw Gang (nmia.com/~btkog); The James-Younger Gang (islandnet.com/~the-gang); and the grand poobah of all, Wyatt Earp sites (whether you love him or hate him), Glenn Boyer's Historical Research Associates (histres.com).

All of these sites promote western history in one form or another, either by encouraging you to learn more, or to join their club so you can meet people with the same interests.

Boyer's site invites visitors to ask the author questions, an idea that proves fairly hilarious if you have the patience to actually read each page. Another place that encourages discussion of western research, specifically gunfighters, is The Gunfighter Zone (gunfighter.com). The Zone offers a bulletin board for visitors to post questions and comments about the current state of research, art, and western hobbies.

The club sites, of course, also include historical associations; luckily, there are many available on the Internet. A good starting point for the western fan is the Police Guides Directory to Outlaw-Lawman Historical Associations (police guide.com/outlaw-lawman.htm). This site will lead you to associations ranging from WOLA (flash.net/~pggreen), NOLA (cowboy.net/western/~nola.html), and the very impressive, and endless, information offered by the Oklahombres (qhs/~dcordry/hombres.html).

If actual physical history is your interest, a great place to start is the Davis Arms Museum (state.ok.us/jmdavis), featuring just about every firearm in existence. Collectors of rare documents and historical autographs should aim for Americana Catalog (concentric.net/~Rbattles), where visitors can view and bid on rare pieces of paper history.

Some other points of interest include western, or oddly relevant western, products for sale over the Internet.

I found a video game based on Billy the Kid (the final stage is a gunfight with Pat Garrett); Faro, which has been resurrected as a interactive card game; and a very strange site that sales typefaces based on the actual handwriting of famous historical badmen.

I reckon the Information Highway is a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. It'll never take the place of a dirt road leading to a good fishing hole.

Marcus Huff



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# ANOTHER BILLY FOR THE PILE

I have enclosed an alleged photograph of William Bonney, "alias Billy the Kid," pictured with a young girl.

The original old tintype was given to me by a very prominent family from southern California over forty years ago. They were very adamant as to its authenticity. The young girl in the photo is unidentified.

I was hoping that maybe you or your readers might be able to identify the girl in the photograph in relation to authenticating the photo of "Billy the Kid."

Any help you can give me would be greatly appreciated, personally and historically. Thank you very much.—*Craig Sturm, Coulterville, California.*

**Editor's Note:** I knew I couldn't truly call it the new year until I got a new Billy photo tossed my way.

This one is a bit more interesting than most, given the apparent age of the lad in the photo. Since Billy's childhood is still a matter of great debate, it would help if we knew when and where this photo was supposedly taken. A clue to the "prominent family" who previously owned the tintype would be equally useful information. This would be the best place to start a positive trace of the photo's origins.

The identity of the girl is indeterminable until background on the photo itself is found. No popular reference has ever been made to a girl in the McCarty or Antrim families. Of course, this could be a cousin, neighbor, or schoolmate.

The first step in identifying a photo of Billy the Kid, or anyone for that matter, is to compare it with an already verified photo of that person. Unfortunately, all Billy comparisons are based on one photo, and it is in worse condition than most. Based solely on that one verified photo, what we do know about Billy is this:

The only clearly visible ear, the right, protrudes greatly; in accordance to popular description, the Kid has "buck teeth" and a long chin and his eyes appear heavy-lidded (some believe he had been drinking when the photo was taken).

Your photo, Mr. Sturm, indicates that the subject does have a protruding ear, an unusually long chin, and the same general facial features that are common on the older, taller Billy. But without documentation of some sort, or a reliable oral history of the photo's origin, identifiying the boy and girl is next to impossible.

I wouldn't worry too much about finding someone with an interest in helping you identify the photo, however. I'm sure my phone is ringing off the hook as you read this.

## SADDLE PALS By Graham Ward

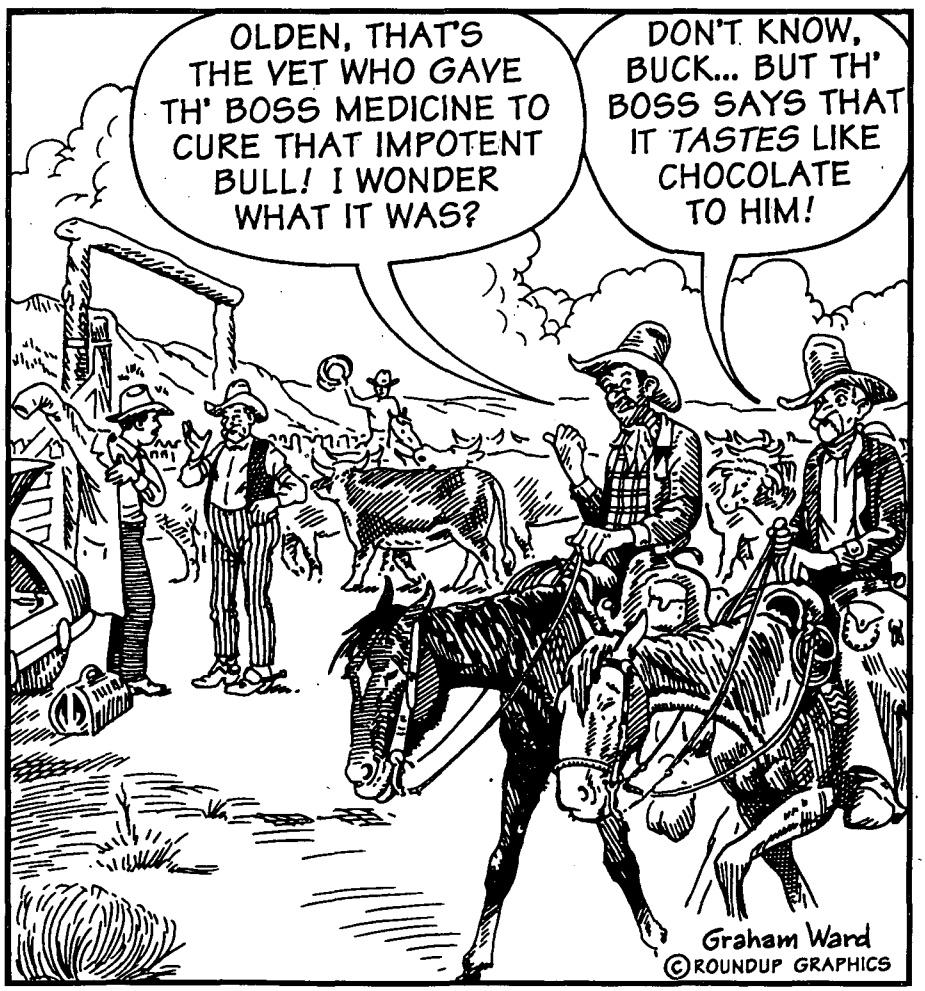


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Photo courtesy of Craig Sturm

Reader Craig Sturm is looking for information on the young girl in this photo with an alleged "Billy the Kid."


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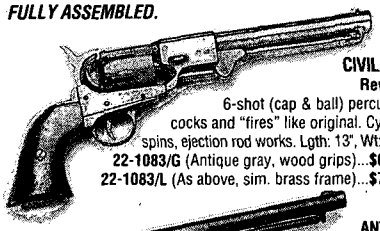

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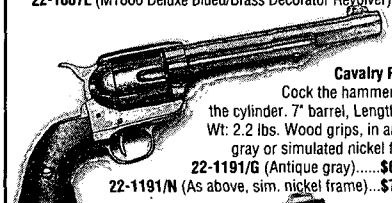

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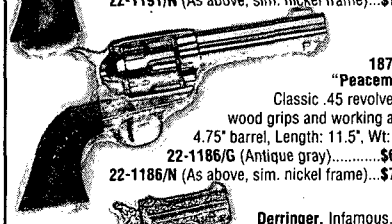

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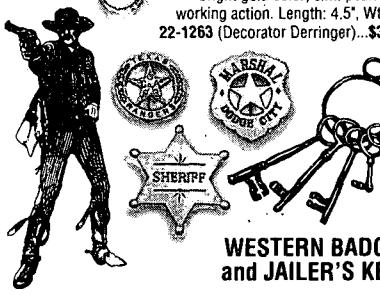


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ROUNDUP

# A MUSEUM TOUR OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK TRAIL

## By George Cathcart

The West has been mapped. There are no great territories left to discover. But the adventure of discovery is not lost. You can still follow in the footsteps of the explorers and indulge your sense of adventure with the aid of modern maps, guidebooks, and especially museums.

More than 190 years ago Meriwether Lewis and William Clark explored the newly-acquired Louisiana Territory for President Thomas Jefferson. They traveled from St. Louis, Missouri, up the Missouri River, across the Continental Divide, and down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. Then they came back.

Lewis and Clark collected information about people, animals, plants, minerals, and soils, about the courses and positions of rivers and mountain ranges, about climate and landforms. Theirs was truly one of the most comprehensive and successful explorations ever undertaken.

Today, interest in Lewis and Clark is growing rapidly, and thousands of people are taking to the roads to follow all or part of their more than 4,000-mile route. They are finding, naturally, that most of the wild rivers and wild lands have been tamed, and the wildlife is far more scarce.

But the careful collection of historical, natural, and cultural information that Lewis and Clark began has continued apace. Modern travelers following their route can find dozens of museums devoted not only to Lewis and Clark, but also the Indians before and after them, as well as trappers and traders, railroaders and ranchers, cowpokes and prospectors. Some of the museums are grand in scale, others are strictly local, but all are full of discoveries waiting to be made.

Let's take a quick tour of some of the museums along the Lewis and Clark route. We'll look closely at some of the best, and different kinds of museums, and we'll identify other examples.

We begin where the expedition began and ended, in St. Louis, Missouri. Directly under the arch by the Mississippi River is the Museum of Westward Expansion. Here the visitor can trace the exploration and settlement of the entire West, beginning with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

The story of the Lewis and Clark expedition figuratively embraces the rest of the museum with large scenic photos, journal excerpts, and samples of the tools, weapons, wildlife, and Indian life that defined the expedition. The museum proceeds through the entire nineteenth century, featuring explorations, wars, and the settlement that transformed the frontier into the west of today.

The Museum of Westward Expansion is the most comprehensive museum on the Lewis and Clark trail. But in its grand scope, it lacks some of the interesting details that can be found only in smaller museums or facilities dedicated to a sin-



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gle event or location.

For instance, several museums are devoted to the Lewis and Clark expedition. The best are a couple of interpretive centers at the western end of the route.

The Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Washington's Fort Canby State Park leads visitors on a photo tour of the entire route, more comprehensive than the display in St. Louis. Audiovisual programs, dioramas, replicas of dugout canoes, weapons, and tools bring the expedition to life. At the end of the "tour," the visitor ascends a ramp and gazes out of a floor-to-ceiling picture window on the breathtaking sight of Cape Disappointment, where the explorers finally saw the Pacific Ocean.

Across the Columbia River on a four-mile-long bridge and about ten miles south of Astoria, Oregon, is a careful reproduction of Fort Clatsop, where the expedition spent a rainy, miserable winter of 1805-06.

The Fort Clatsop National Memorial's visitor center is a beautifully designed and informative museum. A hundred yards away on its original site is the fort, based on Clark's drawings of the floor plan.

Rangers in period costumes can be found shaving and tanning elk hides (or sewing their own elk-hide costumes), rendering tallow to make candles, crafting furniture, or practicing their marksmanship with muzzle-loader rifles. At the canoe landing, rangers have made dugouts just like the boats the hunters used to ply the Lewis and Clark River in search of elk.

Interpretive centers devoted to other topics are the most common museums along the Lewis and Clark Trail, and travelers should make a point to spend some time exploring them. From east to west, they include:

**Fort Osage**, near Kansas City, Missouri, is a replica of one of the first trans-Mississippi military outposts established after the Lewis and Clark exploration.

**Museum of Missouri River History**, is located aboard the dry-docked *Meriwether Lewis* dredge near Browning, Nebraska, which scoured the bottom of the Missouri River for thirty-seven years, from 1932 to 1969, to open the once treacherous channel.

**Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park**, near Mandan, North Dakota, features General George Armstrong Custer's mansion, whence he rode to his doom in 1876, as well as some earth lodges on the site of an ancient Mandan village.

**Fort Mandan**, a replica of the 1804-05 winter quarters of the expedition, is located near Washburn, North Dakota. The original site has been washed away by the fickle Missouri River.

**Knife River National Historic Site**, Stanton, North Dakota, includes re-creations of Mandan and Hidatsa earth lodges on the site of the villages near where Fort Mandan actually stood.

**Fort Union**, near Williston, North Dakota, is a re-creation of the American Fur Company outpost that dominated the Upper Missouri River for nearly four decades.

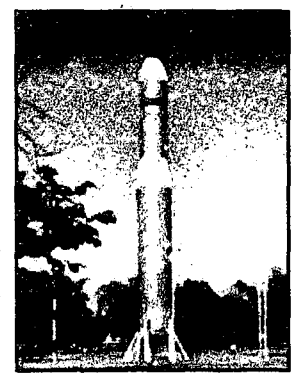
**Pompey's Pillar**, near Billings, Montana, is a landmark rock beside the Yellowstone River where visitors can view William Clark's signature, carved in the rock July 21, 1806, during the explorers' return voyage.

**Museum of the Upper Missouri**, at Fort Benton, Montana, honors the days of riverboats and trappers who flooded the region after hearing Lewis and Clark's stories of the beaver bonanza.

**Whitman Mission**, Walla Walla, Washington, is the site of a former

*Lewis and Clark and their party were the first white Americans to see the upper Missouri, but they were not the first people there.*


## Western Nebraska's Military Heritage



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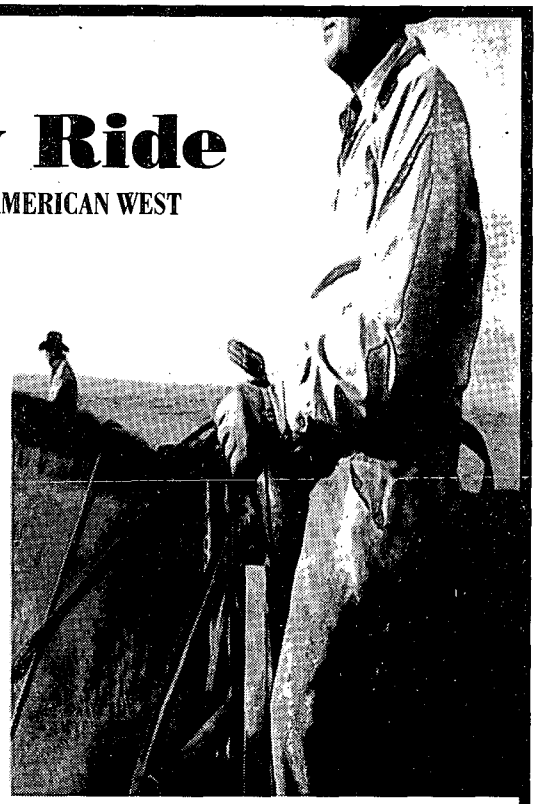

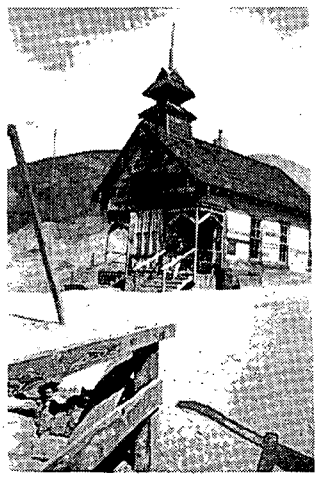

# Daggett

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Protestant mission that became a key wayside on the Oregon Trail and hosted a violent and tragic misunderstanding in 1847.

**Sacajawea State Park and Interpretive Center**, Pasco, Washington, is home to a small museum devoted to the expedition.

LEWIS AND CLARK and their party were the first white Americans to see the upper Missouri, but they were not the first people there. Along most of their route, the explorers encountered American Indians who had lived in that vast country for thousands of years.

The explorers made a significant effort to comprehend the complex relationships among the tribes and their cultures. The travelers and settlers who followed Lewis and Clark were less careful about the indigenous people, with the result that not only cultural histories, but entire tribes of American Indians virtually vanished.

Fortunately, some tribes have built their own museums to preserve and display their cultural heritage for themselves and for visitors.

The highlight of the Akta Lakota Museum ("Honor the People" in Sioux; admission free) at Chamberlain, South Dakota, is the extensive collection of works by contemporary American Indian artists. It is worth a visit for the paintings and sculptures alone. But don't pass up the displays of lodges, clothing, crafts, tools, and weapons of the Sioux who once dominated the Missouri River through most of what is now South Dakota. An extensive gift shop with books, jewelry, and Indian-made crafts is also available.

Three agricultural tribes living in earth lodge villages dominated central North Dakota in Lewis and Clark's time. Decimated by smallpox, war, and nineteenth century government policies, the Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan Indians now live on the Fort Berthold Reservation, which straddles Lake Sakakawea, one of the impoundments on the Missouri River. At New Town, North Dakota, the tribes honor their history and culture in



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the Three Affiliated Tribes Museum.

This museum clearly aims to honor tribal leaders and to preserve the histories of the tribes and the reservation. Much of the display space is devoted to photographs and biographies of the leaders and heroes of each of the three tribes. A display case on the second floor presents "A Salute to Captain William Clark" for his "sincerity and fairness" when serving as superintendent of Indian affairs "in an era when such treatment was uncommon."

You can also find, of course, clothing, tools, weapons, toys, and other crafts of the three tribes. A small cutaway model of a traditional earth lodge on the second floor gives construction details and explains the spiritual and practical significance of virtually every feature in the lodge. Full-scale reproductions of earth lodges are also displayed at two nearby facilities mentioned above: Knife River Villages and Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park.

Other Indian museums include the Iowa Sac and Fox Mission Museum near Sparks, Kansas, and the visitor's center museum of the Nez Perce National Historic Park in Spalding, Idaho.

In nearby Lewiston, Idaho, is an excellent example of another type of museum found in small towns along Lewis and Clark's route. The Luna House Museum displays Nez Perce history, including a moving triptych of portraits of Chief Joseph, as well as artifacts of the early settlement and development of the region.

At the Klein Museum in Mobridge, South Dakota, Culbertson Museum in Culbertson, Montana, and the Dillon Museum in Dillon, Montana, local families and businesses have emptied their attics and donated old clothes, appliances, furnishings, and tools to outfit the displays.

But in no way do these places look like rummage sales. Local volunteers have arranged the artifacts to recreate the homes, churches, businesses, and offices that defined the ancestors' way of life.

Travelers with enough time should explore interpretive centers at dams, which often tell much more than the story of hydropower. The visitor's centers at Gavins Point, Nebraska, Fort Randall, South Dakota, and Bonneville Dam in Washington are all worth a stop.

Last but not least is a must-see museum that defies every category listed.

Eccentric entrepreneur Samuel Hill converted his mansion on a cliff high above the Columbia River gorge to an art museum in 1926. Hill was a patron of the arts and an admirer of European royalty.

The works on display in the Maryhill Museum, on State Highway 14 near Goldendale, Washington, reflect Hill's own life and tastes. One large hall displays the personal jewelry and treasures of his friend, Queen Marie of Romania. The best way to visit this museum is to wander aimlessly and discover the Russian icons, classical American realism, miniatures, late nineteenth century French paintings, Auguste Rodin artwork, and chess sets made by schoolchildren in the Pacific Northwest. Two small rooms house elaborate chess sets from all over the world. A hallway displays works by contemporary northwestern artists. One circular room displays American Indian artifacts arranged by region.

The vast territory that Lewis and Clark opened was also a diverse assemblage. The people who were already there and those who followed in the explorers' footsteps have put on display what is important to them about their culture and heritage. In an era where national franchises and shopping malls transcend regional uniqueness, these intimate glimpses of our past become all the more precious.

**A Final Note:** although admission to most of these museums is often free or never more than a couple of dollars, don't overlook the donation boxes found near the front doors.


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# MOLLY BROWN

Author's Collection

The young Molly Tobin as she looked when she first met J.J. Brown in Leadville, Colorado.

Margaret Tobin Brown has been celebrated in music, in numerous books, a Broadway play, and a Hollywood extravaganza. These tributes to the West's famous unsinkable lady, while entertaining, did little to convey the truth. It's a shame, too, for the life of Margaret Tobin Brown was every bit as spectacular as the legend.

She was born in Hannibal, Missouri, the daughter of a poor Irish ditch digger, John Tobin, and his wife, Johanna.

Molly (most who knew her referred to her as Maggie) attended school until age thirteen, then secured a job waiting tables at one of the leading hotels in Hannibal. Years later, she enjoyed telling friends how she had served breakfast to Mark Twain in exchange for the pleasure of hearing his wonderful stories of fame and fortune in the West. Whether or not Molly's story is true, she did leave Hannibal in 1886 and moved, with her brother, Daniel to Leadville, Colorado.

Daniel quickly secured work in the mines, making three dollars a day. Molly was hired as a seamstress at Daniels, Fisher & Smith dry goods store on Harrison Avenue. She was a capable employee, and worked hard, but always with the goal of finding something better. That something better had nothing to do with wages. In fact, it had nothing to do with work. Molly aimed to be a wealthy woman and that meant marrying a man with money. She had looked over her prospects. There were fortunes to be made in the mines. The man who could strike it rich in Leadville, could afford to court Miss Molly Tobin.

Molly was not a beautiful woman. Her outstanding features were probably her hands and feet, which were quite small for such a buxom young woman. She had flaming red hair and blue eyes. She also had a headstrong nature and a quick temper, not considered favorable attributes in a Victorian woman. But if Molly's manners left something to be desired, her big-heartedness more than made up the deficit. Men seemed to find Molly Tobin refreshing. She was bright and entertaining. And, after a hard day in the mines, the men

## By Jan Holden



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**IN APRIL 1912, MOLLY TOBIN BROWN WAS ONCE AGAIN ENJOYING EUROPEAN SOCIETY, WHEN SHE RECEIVED AN URGENT CABLE FROM THE STATES. MOLLY MADE PLANS TO RETURN HOME IMMEDIATELY. THE FASTEST TRIP, OR SO SHE WAS TOLD, WAS TO SECURE PASSAGE ON THE RMS TITANIC.**

were more than ready to be amused.

Molly possessed no stage experience, but claimed she enjoyed doing poetry recitations and leading sing-a-longs for the men in Leadville. While she was performing her "penny shows," she was examining the audience. Among the most eligible sat James Joseph Brown, a man with plenty of business savvy and ambition. He had started out in 1885 as just another Leadville miner and had risen to the position of foreman of the Louisville Mine a year later. Everything was happening quickly for the thirty-one-year-old mining engineer. He barely had time to adjust to his business success before he was seriously courting Molly Tobin, who was now nineteen. On September 1, 1886, the couple were married by Father Henry Robinson, Leadville's pioneer Catholic priest.

James Joseph Brown, 1910.

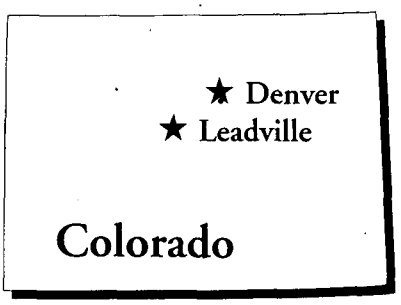
Author's Collection

J.J. and Molly moved into a two-room log cabin near the mines and, though it was not real luxury, it was a big step forward for a gal who had shared cramped quarters in Missouri with her parents and five siblings. Besides, J.J. was still climbing the ladder of success. In 1888 he was made superintendent of the Henriette & Maid Consolidated Mining Company, one of the most productive mines in the region.

In 1892, J.J. held a seat on the board of directors of the Ibex Mining Company. Though Leadville's silver mines were suffering, and the price per ounce had fallen to sixty-one cents, Ibex aggressively pursued a second ore contract in the Little Jonny Mine, once one of the areas major producers of silver and lead. The project was fraught with difficulties from the beginning. The mine shaft hit a layer of dolomite sand that regularly created cave-ins. While J.J. Brown's partners considered abandoning the project, J.J. conceived a method of using baled hay and timbers to stop the cave-ins. It was a shrewd move by one of Leadville's finest mining engineers. The problem was solved and The Little Jonny Mine produced huge quantities of copper and gold. The gold was so pure and the vein so wide, it earned a reputation of being the world's richest gold strike. J.J. Brown and his business partners were now exceedingly rich.

With the realization of wealth, Molly Tobin-Brown decided it was time to enjoy her "new" affluence. In 1894 she urged J.J. to sell their home in Leadville and move to Denver. Molly gave her furniture to friends and relatives, with the plan of securing grander furnishings for her new home, a $30,000 mansion located at 1340 Pennsylvania Avenue, the very heart of Denver's fashionable Capitol Hill neighborhood.

Though J.J. had little interest in glitz and glamour, he humored his wife, and, for a while was actually amused watching Molly decorate the place with her own eclectic taste. The Browns now had two young children, a son, Larry, and a daughter,



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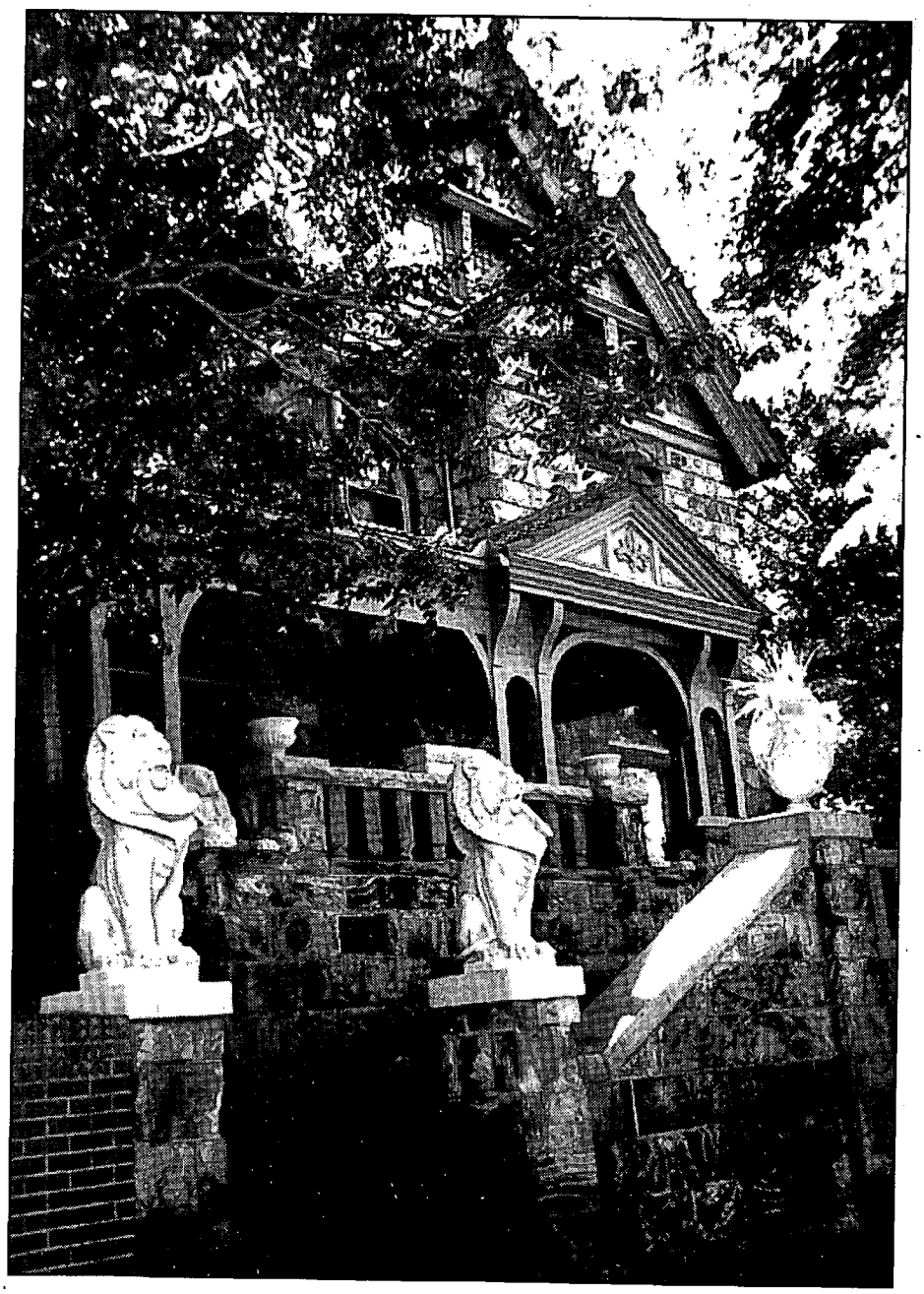
Helen. Molly was not particularly maternal, however, and the children were sent to elite boarding schools at an early age. This allowed Molly lots of time for improving her home and more-importantly, her image in Denver's highbrow society.

Molly was nearly thirty years old, and had not seen a classroom or opened a schoolbook for years. It hadn't bothered her either—not until the move to Denver. Suddenly, Molly felt gauche and awkward. The leading ladies of Denver society had traveled the world.

Their names appeared regularly in the society pages of *The Denver Times.* They gave charity luncheons and opened their homes for lavish parties. Molly Brown's name was seldom on the guest list.

Molly decided it was time she changed her style. She filled her closet with gowns from Paris. She studied foreign languages and toured Europe. She threw lavish parties, with guest lists numbering close to 1,000. She attended the opera regularly and made generous donations to charity.



Author's Collection

The Brown mansion at 1340 Pennsylvania Avenue in Denver. The building is now home to the Molly Brown Museum.

All of this effort certainly brought Molly to the attention of the Denver citizens. In fact, reporters began to take great delight in including "tidbits" in their columns concerning Molly's hairstyle, her jewelry, and her charitable donations. It was not enough for Molly Brown. She enjoyed the stories, but grieved the fact that all her efforts were hopelessly lost on a particular group of Denver ladies. The "Sacred 36" was their unofficial title, and they were led by a former belle from the South, Mrs. Crawford Hill. To Mrs. Hill, Molly Brown lacked breeding. She was "new" money and totally lacking in the refinements. Mrs. Hill's opinion was reinforced by a cruel story penned by Polly Pry, Denver's popular gossip columnist. Pry devoted more than half a newspaper page to a vicious attack on Molly's physical appearance, her lack of culture, and her social ambition. It made Molly so angry that she penned a rebuttal to Polly Pry, which Polly eagerly ran in her column—taking care that Mrs. Brown's grammar and spelling would NOT be edited. If anything, Molly only made herself look more ridiculous to those she hoped most to impress.

To make matters worse, there was increased tension at home. J.J. was engaged in a lawsuit filed by Harry D. Call, who claimed Mr. Brown had seduced his wife while staying at a health spa in Pueblo, Colorado.

The children, now in their teens, were becoming increasingly embarrassed by their mother's rowdy parties and lavish lifestyle (though Helen would grow up seeking, and obtaining, the same recognition by Denver society).

Molly and J.J. kept separate bedrooms, and J.J. even had a special passageway built from his bedroom to his office, so that he could avoid confrontations with his wife. It served him well when he was home. He also spent increasingly more time away from the family, overseeing his real estate and mining investments throughout the southwest and Cuba.

If Molly was troubled by her spouse, she didn't let on. Instead,



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she made several trips to Europe, where her colorful personality and sometimes "eccentric" behavior caused little stir. She spent summers in a rented house in Newport, Rhode Island, and threw gala parties for her affluent neighbors. For some reason, Molly Brown had little problem fitting in with "society," as long as it was miles from home. But home for Molly was still back in Denver, on Pennsylvania Avenue. And she had not given up her quest for acceptance.

In 1909, after twenty-three years of marriage, J.J. and Molly Brown filed for legal separation. After that they were seldom seen together, even for family occasions. Helen's marriage in 1913, for example, was attended by her father, but not her mother. Molly was abroad, once again. Still, J.J. claimed he was fearful that Molly might be stalking him. He suggested to his son that detectives be hired to document Molly's movements and, perhaps, obtain evidence to prove her insane. Apparently, nothing came of the suggestion, though until his death, in 1922, J.J. Brown insisted his estranged wife was his most terrifying foe.

In April 1912, Molly was once again enjoying European society, when she received an urgent cable from the states. Her young grandson was ill. Molly made plans to return home immediately. The fastest trip, or so she was told, was to secure passage on the *RMS Titanic*.

On April 10, 1912, Molly boarded the Jewel of the White Star Line along with more than 2,000 fellow travelers. Molly, of course, booked First Class, paying more than $4,000 for her cabin. She was in fashionable company, rubbing elbows with the Astors, the Guggenheims and Bruce Ismay, owner of the White Star Line. She and Ismay would make headlines six days later, being two out of approximately 700 men, women, and children to survive the sinking of the "unsinkable" *Titanic*.

Molly was later to claim to reporters, that she was never frightened, even when it became obvious that there were not enough lifeboats to accommodate the passengers and crew.

"If the worst should happen, I could swim out," she boasted. But, the crew saw things differently. It was women and children first, and Molly was snatched from the deck and dropped into lifeboat # 6. She never had a chance to demonstrate her technique in the water.

Molly did demonstrate her courage, however, when the quartermaster in charge of the boat became too frightened to row away from the sinking ship. Realizing that the suction caused by the *Titanic* as it slipped beneath the waves could pull the lifeboat with it, Molly grabbed the oars from the quartermaster and ordered another woman to row with her until they were certain to survive the powerful undertow.

Rescue by the *S.S. Carpathia* was slow in coming, but Molly continued to row for six hours, while entertain-

Author's Collection

Margaret "Molly" Tobin-Brown.



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Author's Collection

Molly Brown poses with Captain A.H. Rostrom and the crew of the *S.S. Carpathia* after the sinking of the *RMS Titanic*.

Author's Collection

Molly Brown in her later years, at a resort in Rhode Island.

ing the frightened passengers with hymns and stories of her life in Denver. Though Molly's linguistic skills had never helped her cause in crashing Denver society, it certainly aided her efforts to calm her fellow passengers—most of them immigrant women who spoke French or German and had just lost their men to the disaster.

Molly continued to minister to other passengers after they were safely aboard the *Carpathia*. She made lists of survivors and arranged for their names to be radioed ahead to anxious families waiting in New York. She formed a committee for relief of the destitute victims, and enlisted help from other monied survivors.

In New York, reporters flocked around Molly as she posed for numerous photographs with the captain and crew of the *Carpathia*. When asked by one newsman the secret of her survival, Molly announced, "Typical Brown luck. We're unsinkable."

The *Titanic* disaster gave Molly Brown more publicity than she'd ever known before. In fact, back in Denver, even the haughty Mrs. Crawford Hill was persuaded to agree to throwing a luncheon in honor of Denver's unsinkable lady. It didn't mean a whole lot. By the time the sinking of the *RMS Titanic* was "old news," so was Molly.

For the remainder of her lifetime, Molly Brown continued to be active in charity work and suffragette causes. She had political aspirations, including a failed attempt to win a seat in the United States Senate in 1914.

Molly Brown died October 26, 1932, after suffering two severe strokes. Her passing garnered casual notice in the Denver papers and her funeral service was small and simple. Her body was sent to New York, where she was buried in Long Island's Holy Rood Cemetery, next to her estranged husband, J.J. Brown.



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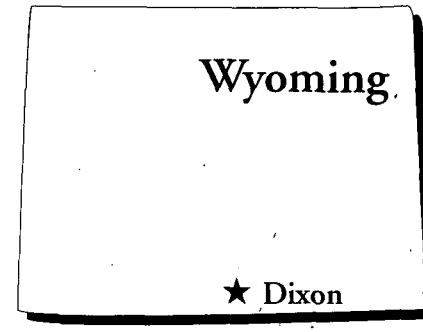
# The Fine Art of Murder

## By Larry K. Brown

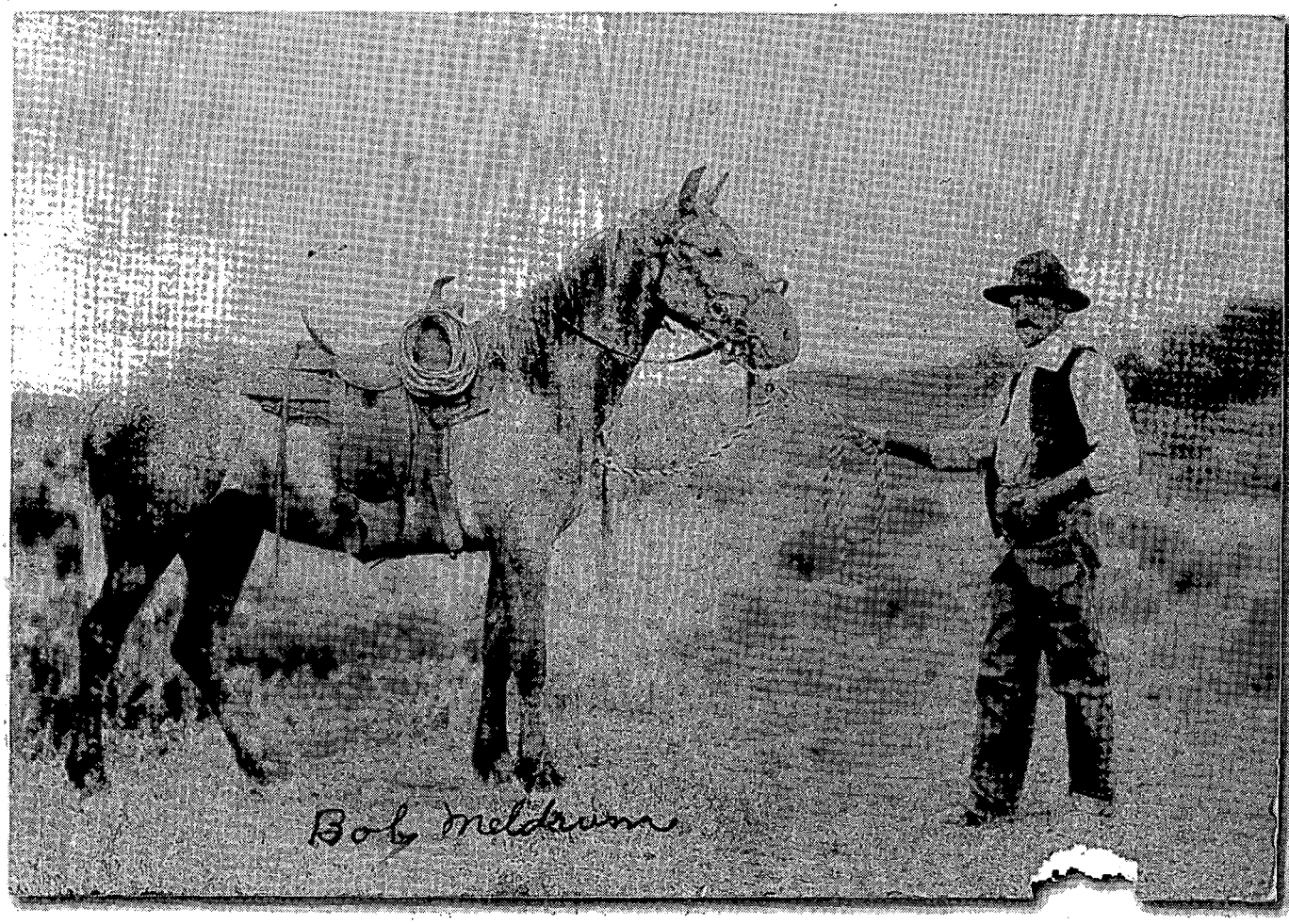



Once upon a time, a mysterious marshal sketched life as he knew it, wove horsehair reins and rope, tooled fine leather, and, some speculate, murdered as many as fourteen men who stood in his way. Others give him credit for killing as few as seven.

What we do know is that Robert D. Meldrum drew the scene illustrating this article as he cooled his heels in a Carbon County jail cell in Rawlins, Wyoming, awaiting trial [see p. 17].

Meldrum said his life began in 1861 in England as the son of Scottish parents, who later emigrated to New York. For reasons he chose not to share, his adolescence escapes the spotlight until he surfaced in northern Colorado. He later bragged that, as a Pinkerton detective there, he and the infamous Tom Horn shot and killed two innocent men whom they thought highjacked horses from Rocky Mountain travelers.

Like a furtive flea, Meldrum popped up next in 1899 as a craftsman at a saddlery and harness repair shop in Dixon, Wyoming. There, he returned to law enforcement when Carbon County officials appointed him as deputy sheriff. In that position, Meldrum caught Noah Wilkerson, an "accessory to murder," who had escaped the Coleman, Texas, jail. Their brief meeting ended when Meldrum's




Courtesy Little Snake River Museum

Claiming to be a Pinkerton detective, Bob Meldrum said he and the murderous Tom Horn once shot and killed two innocent men whom they suspected of horse theft.



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# Davis Downed The Irish

The items in the dead man's clothes shed no clues as to how he died. Justice of the Peace and Acting Coroner J.T. Leighton, in fact, found on Jeff Dunbar's corpse only a buckskin purse with two-bits in it; $30 in bills; $6.25 in loose silver; a Dixon, Wyoming, Mercantile check for $77.31; a couple of receipts; a watch and chain; pocket knife; dice; a pistol cartridge; two keys; a plug, plus some smoking tobacco, and one black, silk handkerchief.

Dunbar made his reservation in hell about 10 PM on Sunday, July 24, 1898, when he bellied up to the east end of the bar [depicted at far right in the sketch by badman artist Bob Meldrum on p. 17] in James W. Davis's saloon in Dixon. As the reputed killer of "more than 100 men in his time" moved to cash in his chips from a poker game, Davis, the portly bartender, recalled,

> The first thing he said he wanted to know what I thought about the Irish. He wanted to know if the Irish wasn't all right and I said, "I did not know anything about the Irish as I had not associated with them enough to find them out. Probably they were all right and probably they was not.' And he said he was Irish and said he knowed they was all right.

John Groshart, Willard Runnells, Chriss Dahl [depicted at extreme left at the bar], Pulal "Joe Mexican" Truillo [in sombrero, at the table], and B.W. Snider [with cigarette in his lips, standing between Truillo and the bar] looked on while Davis and Dunbar rolled dice for a drink. The bartender, who lost the toss and prepared to pour, laid an old pack of cards on the counter, apparently trying to lure Dunbar into a game. But the quarrelsome Dunbar threw the pack on the floor and said he refused to play with an old deck. Despite Davis's offer to clear a new deck, Dunbar refused. Then, evidently unable to resist dredging up a past gambling grievance, Dunbar said, "You tried to run it over me last winter, didn't you?" He alluded to a game in which some say he lost heavily to Davis. As accusations and denials grew more heated, Dunbar swore, "You can't run nothing over me." Suddenly, he went for his gun and, quick as a snake, it cleared the leather as firing followed furiously.

Witnesses claimed Dunbar's first shot hit the floor. His next two slugs, however, found their mark before the unarmed Davis defended himself. One round barely burned his right breast while the second hit his right hip and ripped an exit hole above his groin. A description of the wounds and the action suggests that, at this point, Davis finally pulled a pistol from beneath the bar and, as he backed toward the west door of the saloon, fired two bullets into Dunbar's chest. Dunbar's last shot apparently nicked the flesh of Davis's right thumb near the wrist before it creased his mid-forearm. The barkeep fell, about three feet from the exit, as he tried to reach the door.

In the midst of the fight, an errant shot grazed Snider as he stood near Dunbar, but he escaped serious damage.

Courtesy Museum of Northwest Colorado

The Snake River Stock Association hired "man killer" Bob Meldrum in 1908 to patrol against rustlers. To assure his authority, Albany County authorities made him a deputy sheriff.

first pistol shot clipped the gunman's forehead and his second round ripped through the fleeing felon's back. The coroner claimed the outlaw never knew what hit him.

Returning to Colorado, owners of the Tom Boy Mine near Telluride hired Meldrum as a guard, and later arranged his assignment as a deputy sheriff, to break labor strikes. During the next five years, sandwiched between his killings of miners Olaf Thissel and David Lambert, Meldrum worked briefly in Boise, Idaho, where he wed "Cora F.," a reputed shrew with a son by a previous marriage. She later tired of his sodden lifestyle, however, and left for parts unknown.

By 1908, the "man killer" Meldrum returned to Wyoming, where the Snake River Stock Association hired him to patrol



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against rustlers. To assure his authority, county officials made him a deputy sheriff. And to supplement his income, he operated a ferry over the Little Snake River and managed the Finlayson Lumber Company in Baggs. Although increasing concern over Meldrum's rough-shod reputation spurred Carbon County executives to take away his badge, the people of Baggs seemed not to share that concern. They hired the hothead as their marshal, a position he held until January 16, 1912. That evening, the slight, five-foot, six-inch lawman arrested John "Chick" Bowen for disturbing the peace. When the rowdy drunk resisted, Meldrum shot and wounded the cowboy. Bowen died the next day.

Despite a relatively swift trial for manslaughter, and ultimately a "guilty" verdict, defense maneuvers (as well as Meldrum's temporary flight) delayed sentencing. Justice prevailed, however, on June 28, 1916, when the presiding judge sent the fifty-one-year-old, defrocked peace officer to the Wyoming State Penitentiary in Rawlins, where he served time as "Inmate #2370." But thanks to influential friends, plus his own good behavior, Acting Governor Frank Houx restored Meldrum's freedom with a pardon on January 19, 1919.

Once out of prison, Meldrum moved to Wolcott, where he opened a harness shop in which he also displayed his sketches and related fine art. He might have stayed there, too, had a fire not ravaged the establishment. With that last Wyoming root destroyed, Meldrum again sailed free over the high plains, like a tumbleweed torn by wind from the soil, toward God knows where. Some suggest he joined a brother, who lived in Buffalo, New York. Others snort at that, because they know his later life, like his first years, tends to hide in history defying those who hope to learn the truth.

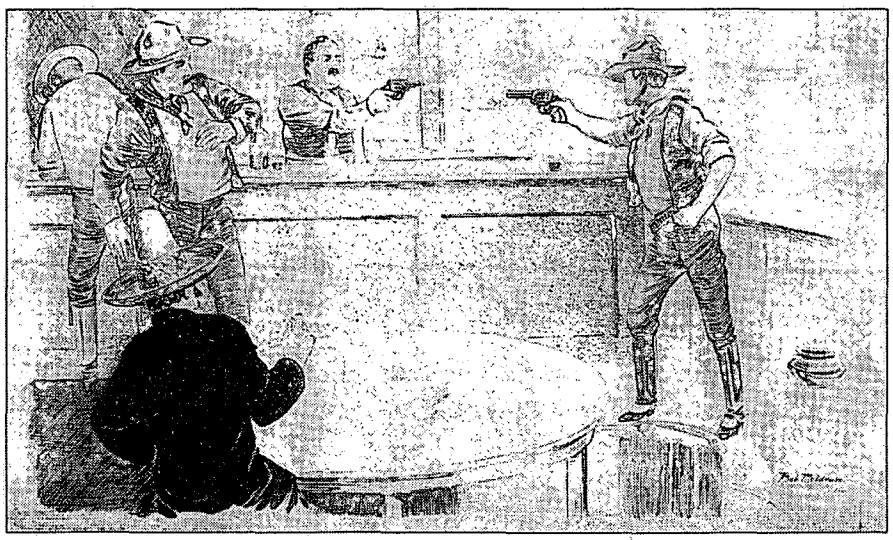
In the meantime, another customer, John Groshart, shouted to Dunbar as he tried to escape: "Jeff, hold on. If you have killed anybody or hurt them, give yourself up." At that Dunbar turned to his left, fell through the open east door, and on to the porch. Rushing to Dunbar's side, Groshart lifted the outlaw's head and asked, "Jeff, are you hurt?" The wounded man failed to answer.

As Davis, with a gun in his hand, stood bleeding, Groshart left Dunbar and went to the injured bartender. "I pushed him back in the saloon to the bar," Groshart recalled, and said, "Jim, stay here." As Davis struggled to reload his gun, Groshart said, "Jim, you have no use for that. Trust me as a friend and a brother. You have no business out there."

In the meantime, someone called for Dr. J.B. Weaver and Davis limped back into the barroom as bystanders followed him into the saloon. Going to the cash drawer, Davis began taking his money when A.N. Allen, a local citizen, approached and said, "Give that to me as you was shot. You had better give me your money and go and lay down." Allen recalled Davis gave it to him without counting.

When Doctor Weaver arrived, he found Dunbar where he had fallen. From his labored breathing and the blood flowing from his mouth, the physician knew the man had little time left. Unable to do more for Dunbar, the doctor next went to Davis to examine and dress his wounds.

The following day, Monday, July 25, after reviewing the circumstances, Justice Leighton subpoenaed a six-man coroner's jury, which appeared that day at the scene of the crime and declared, "We...do find and say that...Jeff Dunbar came to his death...by a gun shot wound inflicted by James Davis of Dixon, Wyoming in said James Davis's Saloon." That brief decision not only settled Dunbar's fate, it also closed the case. The court took no further legal action against Davis who, the jury believed, acted in self-defense.



Wyoming Division of Cultural Resources

This untitled pen and ink sketch by badman Bob Meldrum illustrates a gunfight between James W. Davis and outlaw Jeff Dunbar. Meldrum drew this picture while awaiting trial for the 1912 shooting of Baggs, Wyoming, cowboy John "Chick" Bowen.

**A Final Note:** Once Jeff Dunbar died, rumors ran rife about his life. For example, little is known about his earliest years, but Willis George Emerson, who wrote of Dunbar for the *Denver Times,* claimed the outlaw once led "a marauding band of desperadoes [sic] known as the 'Robbers Roost' gang," a band including such notorious characters as "Broncho" Johnson, Butch Cassidy, Bert Charters, Jack Garland, Jim Stevens, Tom Turley, "Cherokee Buss," and Isom Dart.



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# Richard Franklin Tankersley
# West Texas Frontiersman

★ By Barbara Barton ★

## Richard Franklin Tankersley
## TEXAS RANGER

Fort Concho National Historical Landmark

Richard Franklin Tankersly.

Richard Franklin Tankersley wasn't a Texan by birth, but that didn't stop him from making his mark on West Texas as an early settler. Richard was born in Decatur, Alabama, and married Annie Eleanor Allen from Abernathy, Mississippi, in 1848. The call of the West hit the Tankersleys as a young married couple, so Richard and Annie decided to head out on the Texas Trail.

They loaded all their earthly possessions and two slaves, George and Betty, and took off in two covered wagons pulled by oxen. The family crossed the Mississippi River by flatboat and continued west. The Tankersleys arrived in Williamson County, Texas in 1852, the year their first child, Elizabeth, was born. Eventually, the family grew by six more children: Clarissa, George Washington, Fayette, Mary, Sara, and Henry Martin.

Richard soon seemed restless as he pushed his family farther west, first to Cherokee County and then on to San Saba and Brown counties. Indian raids were a constant threat to settlers, like Richard and Annie, in remote areas. As an only child of wealthy parents, Annie must have been shocked at the life she now led with Indians so near. United States troopers in forts along the Texas frontier were too far from most settlers to help much, so the Texas government set up its own line of defense. Richard became a part of this maneuver to protect Annie and his children.

Since the U.S. troops concentrated more on the Red River and the Rio Grande areas, Texas Governor Hardin R. Runnels



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received authority from the Texas legislature to establish troops across the interior frontier regions. With $70,000 appropriated, he commissioned John Williams on May 20, 1858, to "enroll a company of twenty mounted men" from Llano and San Saba counties for protection against the Indians. Richard joined this group May 24, 1858, to serve for sixty days. Tankersley led a detachment through Comanche and Buchanan. His second son, Fayette, was born in 1859, during Richard's "Texas Minute Man Days."

Texas Minute Men were organized to protect their immediate areas. They not only had to be dedicated, but they also had to supply their own horses, saddle, and bridles, plus a good rifle or double barrel shotgun, a pistol, and plenty of ammunition. An Austin store did provide rations for the two months in the field.

The duties of these protectors were described in the diary of Samuel Newman:

> Men in the Frontier Service of Texas were exempt from conscription until the spring of 1864. They were to scout one-fourth of their time and not be away from home more than two months at a time unless they were fighting Indians or there was some other emergency. They were to scout and look out for Indians, protect the settlers, the wagon trails and the mail lines.

During this time, Tankersley and his family were living in an abandoned government building at Camp Colorado on Jim Ned Creek in present-day Coleman County. A family, known only as the Jacksons, also lived on Jim Ned Creek. One day the Jacksons went for a family picnic on the creek near their home. Indians attacked and killed the parents and older daughter. They took the younger boy and girl captive.

Tankersley went with the Texas Rangers to try to rescue the children. When the Indians realized they were being pursued by the troopers, they pushed the two children off their horses and sped away. The Rangers didn't see the children at first, but when they doubled back on their trail, they heard the crying boy and girl in the bushes. The troopers took the scared and scratched children to the Tankersley home to care for them until relatives arrived.

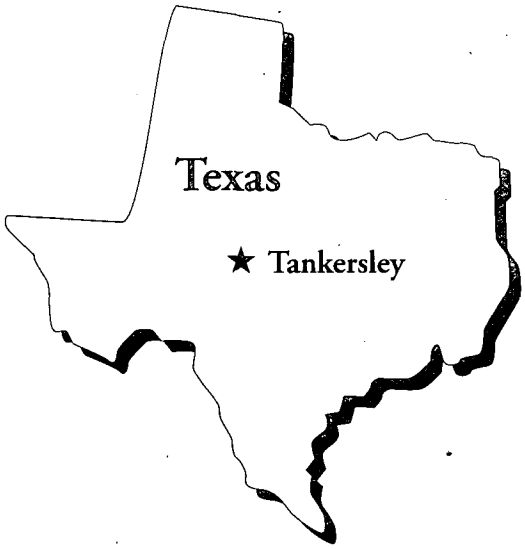
The early settlers lived in constant fear of Indian attack. Some people could endure this and others couldn't. The Tankersley slaves, George and Betty, feared the Indians and were unhappy in the new land, so Annie did a kind act. She sent them back to their home in the South.

The following fall, Tankersley reenlisted with the Minute Men or Rangers, as they were now called, in October. The troopers noticed that the worst raids happened in the fall and late-winter time when the full moon appeared. Richard's group was assigned to check on the area from the Pecan Bayou in Brown County to the San Saba River.

While at San Saba, Tankersley may have made a side trip to visit an area of West Texas which the Tankersleys would later call home. The South Concho area was only fifty miles from the mission San Saba. If Richard visited the region on this trip, he nevertheless stayed with the Rangers until January 1863.

By the spring of 1864, Tankersley had decided to move to the South Concho River. The ox-drawn wagons rolled west once more, accompanied by four or five of the Tankersley children. (One child, Henry Martin, was born sometime in 1864, whether born in Central Texas or West Texas is uncertain.) Seven hundred cattle and forty-five horses followed.

Fayette described their new home as a beautiful site. Wild flowers were blooming, grass was stirrup-high, and the sparkling river held many fish. They saw huge flocks of turkeys, and antelope and deer




roamed in herds of thousands. That first fall the buffalo came in herds that "in the distance they looked like great swarms of flies."

Life was not easy in this new place, though. The family was very much alone. No other permanent residents lived in the area. It was especially hard on Annie Tankersley. She had no help like a wealthy family of the South would've had, but instead, she found herself cooking over a campfire for a husband and a handful of children. The family slept in a covered wagon until Richard built a cabin for them.

During the four years, 1864-1868, that the Tankersleys lived at the head of the South Concho, Annie frequently found herself alone with the children. She would sit with a gun in her hand and listen far into the night as Indians crept around outside and tried to steal their horses.

Once Tankersley was trying to pen the dairy cows he kept for the family's supply of milk and butter. When he tried to round them up, he discovered a buffalo calf in the herd. Richard roped the calf and tied it to a tree, then he continued to drive the cows to the pen. Later, when he came back to untie the calf, it was shot full of arrows. Indians had watched the whole penning episode.

As the children reminisced years later about their early life on the South Concho, they couldn't figure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out why the Indians hadn't killed them. The only thing they could decide was that "The Indians knew Mother wasn't afraid, by then, and maybe the Indians respected Father as a brave man."

All the children remembered a visit by the Kickapoo Indians in January 1865. Tankersley was ready to fire a gun as the Indians approached the house, but one Indian said, "Me no fight! Me friend!" The chief said they were looking for lost horses. He drew a horse shape in the sand and added his brand. Tankersley got down on the ground, drew his brand, and explained that he had also lost some horses.

Elizabeth, the oldest child, remembered that the Kickapoos were friendly Indians. They curiously opened drawers and lifted lids, but they didn't take anything in the house. Mary was the smallest child and the Indians scared her. She ran behind the door. One old squaw tried to give her beads through a crack between the door and the wall, but Mary was terrified.

Their mother was the usual gracious host, and she offered the Indians honey which was still in the honeycomb. They scooped it up in their hands and ate it. As the Indians left, they and Tankersley agreed to exchange any lost horses either found. Richard was very surprised to find some of his lost horses the next morning in his corral.

The Indians were attacked several days later by 500 Texas Rangers and Minute Men in the Battle of Dove Creek. Tankersley helped to bury the dead of this battle a day or two later in a terrible snowstorm. One of the dead was a Minute Man that Richard had ridden with years before.

This battle, where the Indians were friendly and never should have been attacked, changed the attitude of nearby tribes. More attacks on whites occurred, until finally the Tankersleys had to move nearer to civilization. They moved to a location on Spring Creek just above a community called Leedale. They lived there about four years.

By 1869, Tankersley had quite a bit of cattle, but due to the Civil War, he would be paid in leftover Confederate money if he sold his cattle in nearby states. The only thing Tankersley could do was trail them to San Bernardino, California, where he knew he could receive gold coins for his cattle. The day he left, his daughter Mary remembered an impressive sight. She said, "The 1,700 three and four-year-old steers spread out over a mile of trail. They were all colors: roan, yellow, and black."

Tankersley lost 700 steers on the trail, and the number of cowboys decreased as the trip developed. Some decided to stay at forts that the herd passed. Instead of getting $18 or $20 a head like he expected, Tankersley got a whopping $25 a head, which amounted to $25,000. He didn't exactly trust the cowboys who'd come with him, so he paid them off and took a ship around South America to Galveston, Texas, traveling by himself.

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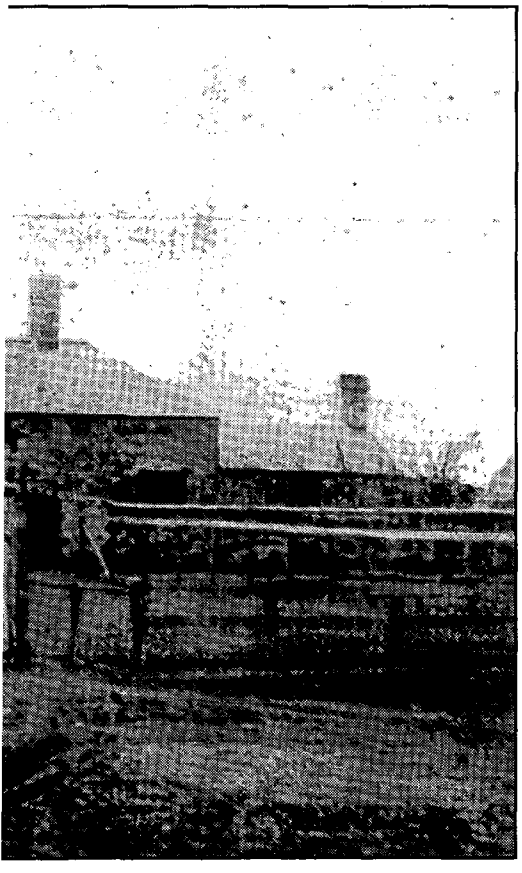
When he reached Galveston, he bought two horses: one to ride and the other to use as a pack horse. It carried two canvas bags of $10 and $20 gold pieces. Although he traveled alone, one night two fellow travelers asked permission to camp with him. He agreed because he didn't want to say "No" and raise their suspicion.

That night Tankersley slept with his gold under his head for safe keeping. The next morning he awoke to find his fellow travelers gone, along with $500. They had ripped the saddle-bag enough to get that much without waking him. When he reached home, Richard felt lucky to have lost only $500 and his seven hundred steers.

When he got to his cabin on Spring Creek, after the eight month trip, Tankersley's family was gone. Major John P. Hatch of Fort Concho had urged Richard's family to move to the fort months before. Indian renegades were on the war path and couldn't be controlled. Hatch knew that civilians weren't supposed to live in the fort, but he allowed Annie to bring her six children (the sixth child, Sara, was born in 1867) to Officer's Quarters No. 3, which was one of Fort Concho's few completed buildings.



Fort Concho National Historical Landmark

Richard decided at once that he must hide his gold from the sale of the cattle. He and his oldest daughter, Elizabeth, pried open a hogshead of lard and used the container to bury the money. Other accounts say he buried it under the floor boards of one of the officer's quarter buildings.

Tankersley realized his family needed to stay in a protected area so he began building a home for them across the river from the fort, in Santa Angela. This project took about a year and was situated where Magdalen and East Concho streets intersect today in San Angelo.

While the children were at Fort Concho, they saw Indian women imprisoned in rock corrals behind the fort. The troopers would toss raw meat to the Indians for food, which seemed like terrible treatment to the Tankersley children. Also, the prisoners received messages from their Indian friends outside the fort by calls of animals and birds. Each hoot and howl was answered as the night progressed so it became very noisy around the fort.

With the family safe, Richard could devote more time to re-stocking his cattle herd. With his California gold, he bought land for about fifty cents to one dollar per acre. Other cattlemen were coming into the area and buying ranches, and their fences prevented Tankersly from using the free range he had previously enjoyed.

In 1871, before many fences appeared, Tankersley's cattle ranged from the head of the South Concho, across Spring and Bell creeks, along the Middle and North Concho rivers, to the divide between the North Concho and the Colorado River, totalling fifteen to twenty square miles. He tried to keep his cattle under herd, but this was difficult with 7,000 to 10,000 heads. When he did buy land, Tankersly wisely purchased lots at the head of both Dove Creek and Spring Creek. This assured him an ample water supply.

Fort Concho National Historical Landmark

Annie Tankersley.

Once Tankersley and a hired hand were checking cows on the Middle Concho River. They ran into a band of Indians and tried to get away. Finally, the two men jumped into the river and hid under some trees. They were able to fight the Indians from this point, but Tankersley got shot in the ankle. He never had the bullet removed.

Richard contracted with the Army to furnish all the meat for Forts Concho, McKavett, and Stockton. With such a large contract, Tankersley had to develop a meat processing plant. This structure stood where the San Angelo Central Fire Station is now.

In the 1870s Annie Tankersly decided she was tired of frontier life. Surely she knew it was only a short time until Richard would want



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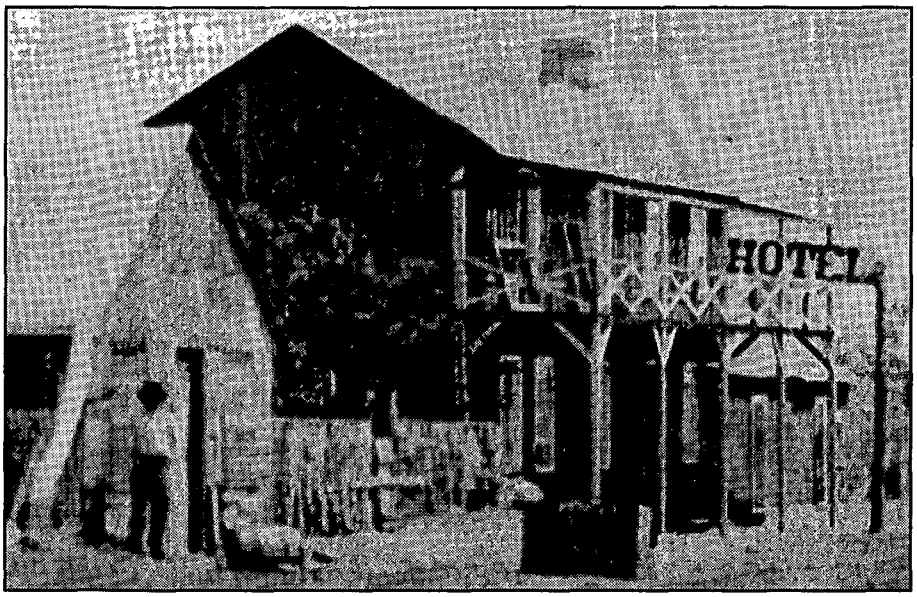


West Texas Collection

Anne Tankersley's Concho House Hotel. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1882.

to move to a less-populated area, so she divorced him.

Annie opened another era of her life as a hotel proprietor. With the divorce settlement she had sufficient funds, so she built the Concho House, near the present site of the Oak Street Bridge.

Her hotel was once the site of a commotion over a killing. Tom McCarty came to Santa Angela from Syracuse, New York. Tom asked a black soldier, who usually entertained for people in a saloon, to dance for him. When the soldier said he was tired and didn't want to dance, Tom shot him. The sheriff, Jim Spears, arrested McCarty and took him to jail, nothing more than a picket structure measuring ten by ten feet.

The black soldiers at the fort were outraged and headed for the jail. Spears was notified in time to remove McCarty. With four guards, Sheriff Spears relocated the prisoner to the Concho House. Spears asked Mrs. Tankersley if he could hide the prisoner in her hotel. Annie agreed, and the lawman, along with his prisoner and deputies, went upstairs.

Mary Tankersley was sitting up reading that night while her mother and the rest of the family were asleep. A column of black soldiers, almost a block long, came marching up to the hotel as the town slept. Annie Tankersley heard the knock and answered the door. She asked, "What do you boys want?" Many of the men she knew personally.

"We want Tom McCarty."

Annie replied, "He's not here, boys. Choose one or two of your number and I'll take him through my house if you will wait until I put on my clothes." She ran up the stairs and directed Sheriff Spears to sneak out the back way. He quickly took the prisoner out over a ten-foot high picket fence and didn't stop until McCarty was safe in northern Santa Angela. Then Sheriff Spears returned to calm the soldiers at the Concho House.

Quickly, the outraged men surrounded Spears and marched him up and down the street, saying, "Give us McCarty or we'll hang you."

Sheriff Spears replied, "Hang if you want to, but you'll not get McCarty." He held steadfast and they didn't get the prisoner. The next night someone tipped off the soldiers that the prisoner was in the Nimitz Hotel. A black woman had seen McCarty's brother on the street that day and mistook him for Tom McCarty.

That night the same soldiers demanded the prisoner's release from the Nimitz. When nobody responded, the soldiers started shooting into the building. Only an innocent bystander was struck. The next day 150 empty shells lay outside the structure. McCarty's trial was moved to Junction, Texas, and he was eventually found not guilty.

After Richard Tankersley's divorce, he later married Concepcion Maldonado on December 28, 1878, at Ben Ficklin, Texas. He was forty-eight and she was nineteen. They had seven children: Richard, Jr., Francis, John, Josie, Katie, Jim, and Emma. The later years of Richard's life were spent about thirteen miles west of San Angelo in a town bearing his name, Tankersley.

In 1892, Richard sued the government for loss of livestock due to Kiowa and Comanche raids. He argued that the actual loss took place in 1870 or 1871. There was some question as to which year, but by the 1890s the United States was at peace with the Indians. His original petition asked for $94,618 lost to thievery of cattle and horses.

Richard testified that one of his men saw signs of the Indian trail on which the cattle were driven. Tankersley then notified Fort Concho and a party was organized to follow the Indian trail.

The group included a squad of soldiers under a Lieutenant Shoemaker, John Drennan, Bob Miller, Ben Jenkins, and Tankersley. They followed the trail about 125 miles, to the head of the Colorado River. The second day out, they struck another trail about fifteen miles from the first trail. They followed the small trail about thirty miles until it struck a larger trail which was a half mile wide and about two weeks old, judging from the dead cattle they found.

Tankersley said, "We found a good many dead cattle on the trail; could trail them by the buzards [sic], and some of the cattle were killed by arrows, but I think most of them had been run to death, it being July." He told that the cattle were probably dead two weeks and the brands indicated that some also belonged to R.S. Coggins, John B. Parks, and John Chisum. He said the trail was littered with Indian sad-



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dles, moccasins, and trinkets. Then he described how they actually saw some Indians with cattle near the head draws of the Colorado River:

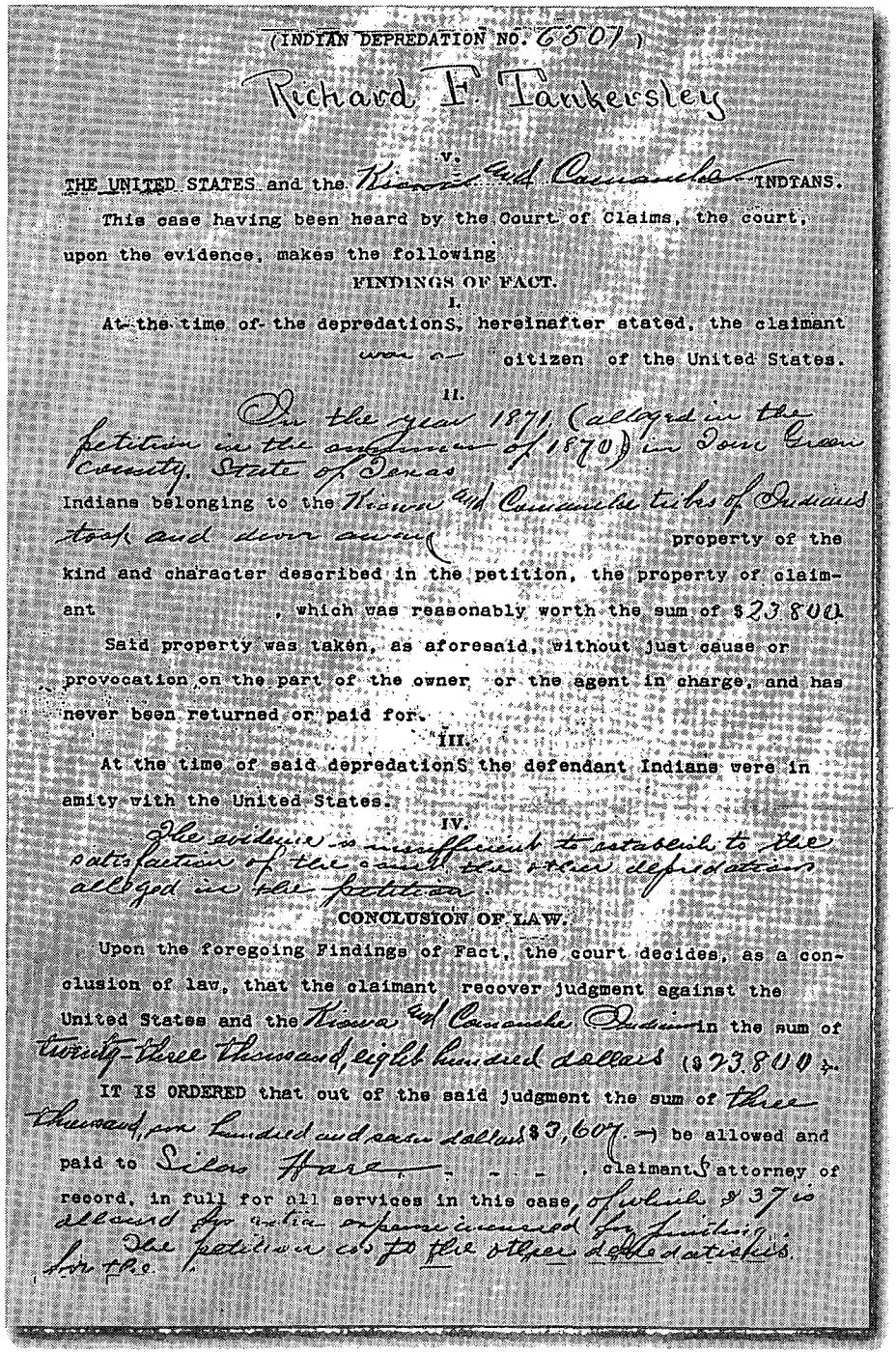
> I saw six Indians, and Lieut. Shoemaker ordered us to charge and four of us run them about five miles, but did not overtake them. We captured about 100 head of cattle from the Indians, which belonged to Coggins and Parks and others, and I met some of my cattle coming back on the trail. This large trail of cattle I saw had come right out of our range and judging from the trail I should think there was at least ten thousand cattle driven over it; Coggins and Park's cattle and mine were ranging together. The largest owners of cattle in that country at that time, were Coggins and Parks, John Chism [sic] next, and mine next.

Tankersley also said he lost some due to a raid in 1871. Before the Indian attacks, he had about 7,500 head of cattle and after the raids, he had 300. When he testified about the loss of horses, the dates weren't clear so the petition was changed to declare only the loss of 5,100 head of cattle at a price of $10 a head, or $51,000. R.S. Coggins testified on behalf of Tankersley and substantiated his story. In the final decision of the court, Tankersley was given only $23,800. The claim was finally recorded in 1902.

Tankersley continued to work cattle until he was an old man. In the late months of 1912, he was rounding up cattle when he developed a fever. Richard Tankersley died of pneumonia at the age of eighty-four. He's buried in a small cemetery in Tankersley, Texas.

Granddaughter Clara said, "Grandfather was a quiet, soft spoken man but he allowed no man to take what was his. He was a just man." She could have also said that he definitely made his mark in settling West Texas and developing the beef industry.

# RICHARD F. TANKERSLEY V. THE UNITED STATES AND THE KIOWA AND COMANCHE INDIANS



(INDIAN DEPREDATION NO. 6501)

Richard F. Tankersley

v.

THE UNITED STATES and the Kiowa and Comanche INDIANS.

This case having been heard by the Court of Claims, the court, upon the evidence, makes the following

FINDINGS OF FACT.

I.

At the time of the depredations, hereinafter stated, the claimant was a citizen of the United States.

II.

In the year 1871 (alleged in the petition in the summer of 1870) in Tom Green County, State of Texas Indians belonging to the Kiowa and Comanche tribes of Indians took and drove away property of the kind and character described in the petition, the property of claimant, which was reasonably worth the sum of $23,800.

Said property was taken, as aforesaid, without just cause or provocation on the part of the owner or the agent in charge, and has never been returned or paid for.

III.

At the time of said depredations the defendant Indians were in amity with the United States.

IV.

The evidence is insufficient to establish to the satisfaction of the court the other depredations alleged in the petition.

CONCLUSION OF LAW.

Upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the court decides, as a conclusion of law, that the claimant recover judgment against the United States and the Kiowa and Comanche Indians in the sum of twenty-three thousand, eight hundred dollars ($23,800).

IT IS ORDERED that out of the said judgment the sum of three thousand, six hundred and seven dollars ($3,607.—) be allowed and paid to Silas Hare, claimant's attorney of record, in full for all services in this case, of which $37 is allowed for extra expense incurred for printing. The petition as to the other depredations for the

Author's Collection

Richard Tankersley filed a grievance with the government to receive payment for cattle stolen by raiding Comanche and Kiowa Indians while a rancher in Texas. Tankersley eventually received $23,800 for the missing stock.



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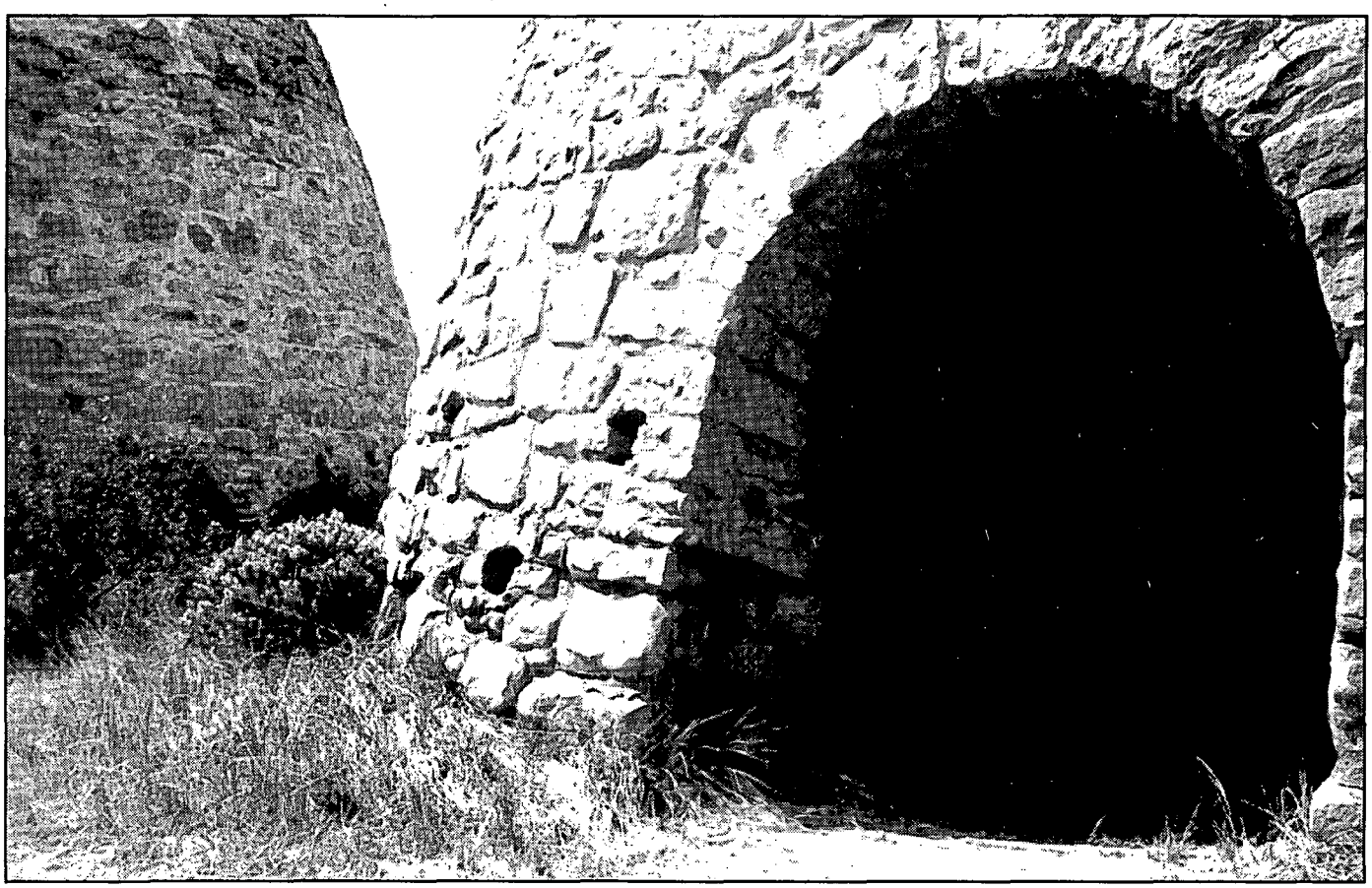
# PIEDMONT AND THE CHARCOAL KILNS

## By Jean A. Mathisen



Author's photos

The Piedmont charcoal kilns were built by Moses Byrne in 1868.

Near the foothills of Aspen Mountain, some eighteen miles southwest of Fort Bridger, Wyoming, three beehive-shaped structures rise from the countryside. Bees would be ecstatic at such giant hives—but they are actually 130-year-old charcoal kilns, built by entrepreneur and dreamer Moses Byrne.

A pioneer of southwestern Wyoming in the early 1860s, Byrne first built a Pony Express and later stage station for Russell, Majors and Waddell at Muddy Creek. In 1868, Byrne and his brother-in-law, Charles Guild, started a town near where the railroad was to be built and called it Byrne. The name was soon changed to Piedmont.

As with most frontier settlements, life was not always simple or peaceful at Piedmont. The Byrnes' four-year-old son, Edward, was taken by Sioux Indians from their ranch. With the aid of Shoshone Chief Washakie the boy was returned. He was given the middle name Washakie in honor of the venerable old chief.

For a couple of years prior to the main construction of the railroad in 1868, the area had served as a living area for tie hacks, workers who cut trees and shaped railroad ties by broad axe. When the tracks came near in 1868, it was found the harsh grade of Aspen Mountain would require helper engines. A siding, engine shed, and water tanks were constructed at Piedmont. Several artesian wells were found to supply the much-needed water.

Mining smelters in Utah needed charcoal, so Moses Byrne con-



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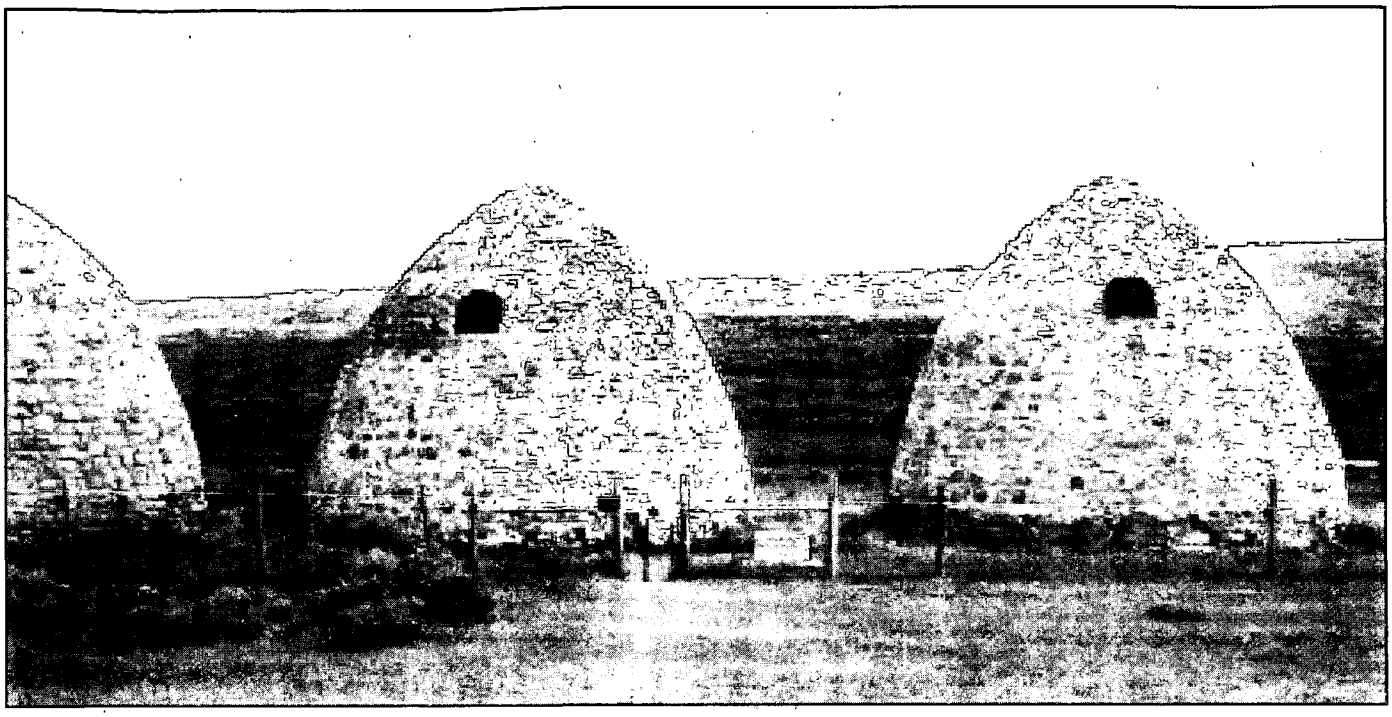


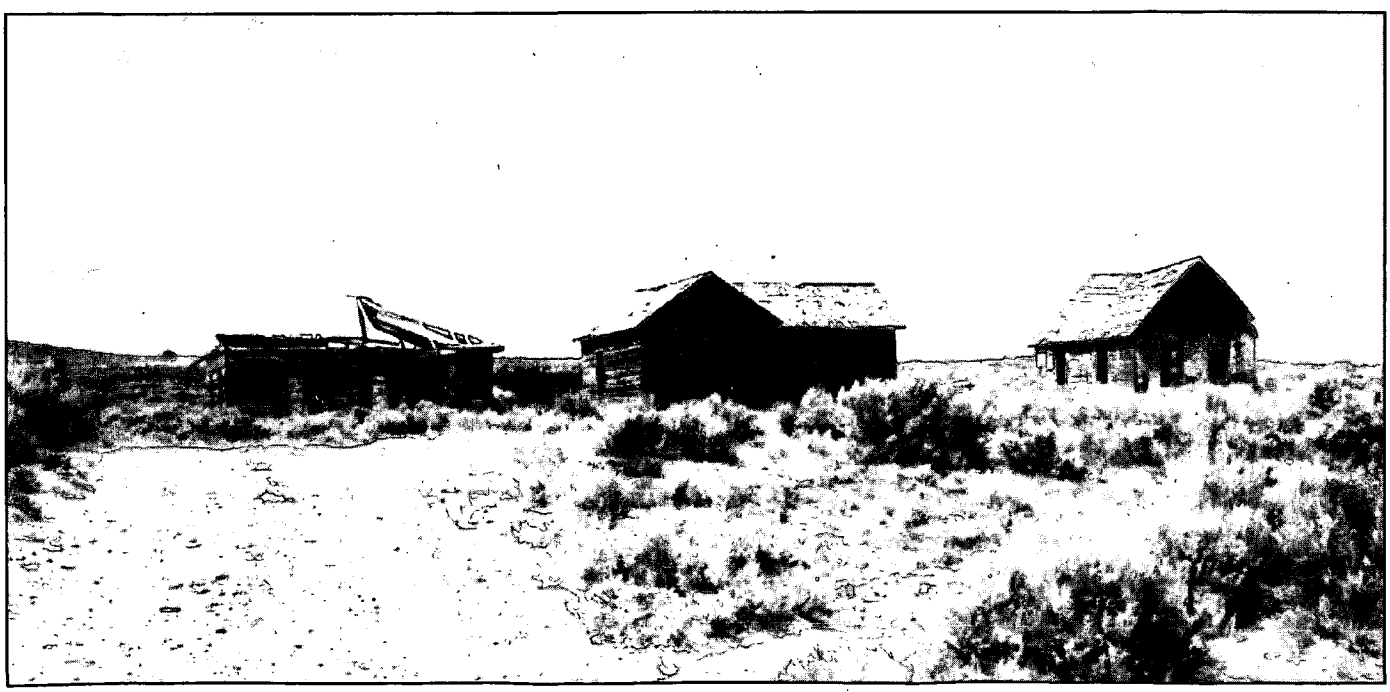
Author's photos

Only three of the original Piedmont charcoal kilns are still standing.

Canary and was killed, along with his wife Charlotte, in an Indian raid on their way to Salt Lake City in 1864.

Violence continued to be no stranger to Piedmont. One Sunday afternoon, two daughters of a Piedmont family were attacked and insulted by a Greek railroad worker. One of the girls told her father, who rode to the worker's camp and called the man out. The irate father lashed the man with a bullwhip and slashed the man's head. Several workers tried to stop the infuriated father, but he fired point blank into the crowd. Two or three men were killed or injured that day.

A vigilante group was formed and soon most of the crime in the small town was curtailed. The leader's method of interrogation was to take a suspect to a grove of trees on the river east of town. Small ropes would be used to tie half hitches around each of the suspect's thumbs. The ropes were then tied to a branch and adjusted so the man would be stretched for several hours until the pain became so intense the suspect



Author's photos

Piedmont, Wyoming, once a prosperous coal and railroad town, now sits empty.



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structed four beehive-shaped kilns to help meet these needs. The kilns were thirty-feet high and thirty-feet in circumference and constructed of native sandstone. Byrne's kilns were not alone—at the peak of the need for charcoal, forty kilns were in operation in the region around Evanston, Wyoming.

The Byrnes and Guilds, along with the Castos and Ingersolls, were some of the first families to settle at Piedmont. The Byrnes, Guilds and Castos had five sons each, and although there were eventually four saloons in town, none of the fifteen boys became a drinker.

One saloon was run by a Mrs. Hyde and another by a man named Al Scruggs. Scruggs would let his wife tend bar while he napped in a room in the back. On one such occasion, a Mexican, who was inebriated, shot out the coal lamp. Scruggs was awakened abruptly, too abruptly to his taste, and shouted, "Shoot again, you dirty so and so, I want to see you smoke." The Mexican ran out the door and down the tracks with Scruggs hot on his tail. The man appeared in the glow of a lamp near the water tank and Scruggs shot him then and there.

The Mexican was buried on the hill behind the hotel.

Another story relates that one Joseph Canary was supposed to have been shot down in a Piedmont saloon and buried in an unmarked grave north of the community. Most sources agree that this man was not Martha Jane "Calamity Jane" Canary's father, although one Martha Canary is listed as being at Piedmont in the Wyoming Territorial census of 1869. Rather, Calamity's father was named Robert

# THE PIEDMONT INCIDENT

By Jean A. Mathisen

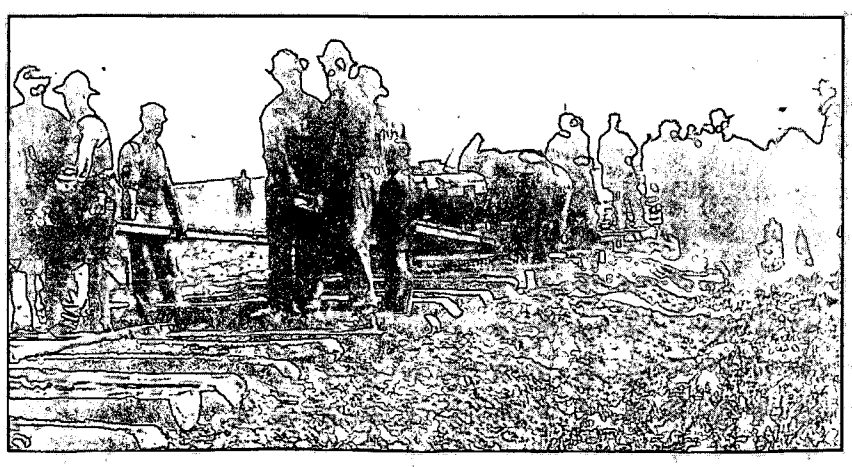
The meeting of the rails at Promontory Point, Utah, on May 10, 1869, was a landmark in both United States and world history. The mighty Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads had worked hour upon hour, day upon day, week upon week, and year upon year to accomplish the feat. What is not generally talked about is the action of some irate tie hacks at Piedmont, Wyoming, that delayed the historic meeting for several days.

Dr. Thomas C. Durant, vice president of the Union Pacific Railroad, along with John R. Duff, Consulting Engineer Sidney Dillon, Silas A. Seymour, and other officials, had started out in a posh, crystal and mirror-lined, private car for the far reaches of the West to meet with California Governor Leland Stanford of the Central Pacific, to join the tracks in Utah.

The tracks (over 555 miles of which had been laid from April 1868 to May 1869) had progressed rapidly. Originally, the Union Pacific was slated to end the track at Humboldt Wells on the Utah/Nevada border because it was felt the Central Pacific faced a monumental task in crossing the Sierras and would not be able to build farther at any rapid rate. The Central Pacific had other notions and not only built across Nevada, but planned to build across Utah as far as Ogden. Both companies built 255 miles of adjoining track only a stone's throw apart, until they finally agreed to meet at Promontory Point. They had incurred the wrath of Mormon leader Brigham Young when neither company chose to build directly through Salt Lake City. It was found by both companies that the best route lay on the north side of the Great Salt Lake. and thus the railroad could not be routed through the capital of Utah Territory.

Piedmont, Wyoming, eighteen miles southwest of Fort Bridger in southwestern Wyoming Territory, had been founded by Moses Byrne and his brother-in-law, Charles Guild, in 1868. Byrne had previously run a Pony Express/stage station on Muddy Creek, and then moved to

*Continued on page 27*



Union Pacific Museum

Union Pacific Railroad workers, 1866.



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would "confess." After this his suffering would be relieved by hanging.

Piedmont received minor publicity when Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroad officials were held hostage en route to the historic meeting of the rails at Promontory Point, Utah Territory, in 1869 [see sidebar].

Another tale relates that on August 10, 1896, after his recent release from the Wyoming Territorial Pen at Laramie, one Robert LeRoy Parker, alias Butch Cassidy, and Bub Meeks rode into Piedmont and checked into the Armour Room at the Piedmont Hotel. Cassidy's attorney, D.A. Preston, who had defended him during his unsuccessful horse stealing trial at Lander, Wyoming, a few years previous, rode in from Rock Springs to meet with them. Preston had left Lander at the gun-pointing request of an irate husband who had caught him running messages between his wife and her lover. (Preston would later serve as Wyoming's attorney general.) Later in the day Preston boarded the eastbound train, and Cassidy and Meeks rode north out of Piedmont. Three days later, on August 13, 1896, Cassidy and company robbed the Montpelier, Wyoming, bank. According to evidence that surfaced at the trial of Matt Warner, the robbery was probably planned at the Piedmont Hotel.

Around 1900 construction began on a tunnel through Aspen Mountain and the railroad was rerouted. Piedmont was bypassed and the population dropped from 200 to 35. The last store closed in the 1940s and the last resident, a sheepherder, froze to death in 1949.

Today a few buildings and some cemeteries are scattered across the hills around Piedmont. Three and one-half of the kilns Moses Byrne built in 1868 are still standing. The site was placed on the National Historic Register in 1971. The charcoal kilns are maintained by the State of Wyoming.

*Continued from page 25*

Piedmont when the railroad was going to be built. He built five beehive-shaped charcoal kilns to provide charcoal for railroad use and for mining smelters in Utah. Piedmont was originally named for the Byrne family, but since the name was similar to Bryan, a railroad stop near Green River City, the name was changed to Piedmont (the region in Italy that both Byrne's and Guild's wives originated from). Piedmont meant "at the foot of the mountain," and the community did sit at the foot of Aspen Mountain. When the railroad came through, test wells were drilled at the townsite and fresh flowing water was found. A water tank and round house were built at the site and Piedmont, with Byrne's large hotel, and several saloons, began to grow. The town also provided a center for tie hack operations in the area. Tie hacks, often of Scandinavian origin, hewed railroad ties by axe for the railroad for two or three dollars a day.

The Union Pacific had wealthy backers, but the company had become poor and untimely about paying its help. By May 1869, the tie hacks were owed between $200,000 and $500,000 in back wages. The meeting of the rails at Promontory Point had been originally set for May 7, 1869. The Honorable Leland Stanford and his associates had arrived at the rail stop several days early. T.C. Durant and his companions from the Union Pacific would face a bigger problem getting to Promontory.

First they were notified that the truss at Devil's Gate bridge had gone out and an emergency replacement had to be made. The crew at the site worked frantically to install a fifty-foot truss and the bridge was soon repaired. When Durant and his private car pulled into Piedmont, 300 angry tie hacks hijacked the car and had it moved onto a siding. Tie hacks stood guard and demanded that Durant wire his company for the huge sum of back pay, and they demanded it in gold. Embarrassed at his plight, Durant wired to Promontory Point and informed the people there that the bridge was out at Devil's Gate and the dignitaries would be delayed for some time. The officials at Salt Lake got wind of his problems anyway and wired Fort Bridger to send troops to Durant's aid. The tie hacks had employed the sympathies of the telegraph operator at Piedmont and the message was effectively intercepted. Durant finally wired to Chicago for the money and spent his time twiddling his thumbs and sweating out the anger of the rail workers.

After the money finally arrived and was distributed to the workers, Durant's car was attached to another train.

The elaborate ceremony at Promontory Point finally took place on May 10, 1859. Spikes, two gold and one an alloy mixture, were to be driven in by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific officials. A telegraph wire was attached so that the signals could be sent to all corners of the United States that the country was finally joined coast to coast by rail. Word had not reached San Francisco of the delay and celebrations had been taking place for three days. Stanford and Durant were to strike the spikes and both took their best shot with a sledge hammer—and missed the first blows. Rail workers had a good laugh over that occurrence, but the officials finally managed to hit each spike a glancing blow and signals went out that Manifest Destiny had finally claimed her own.

T.C. Durant remained with the Union Pacific until 1872 when a major scandal erupted. Charges of improper use of funds and bribery of high government officials were brought to the public's notice. Oakes Ames accused Durant of wrongdoing and the fight and fury began. Before the scandal faded from memory, Ames died of a stroke and Durant retired to the countryside of New York state, a very wealthy man.

Piedmont, Wyoming, is a ghost town today, the remaining charcoal kilns the only monument to history's "Piedmont Incident."



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# THE DALTON GANG'S "TEXAS JACK"

## BY WALT MITTELSTAEDT

"Welcome to Broadwell," the sign says. Broadwell, Illinois, comes by its name honestly. It was named for William B. Broadwell, the man on whose land the town was founded back in 1856. Only 150 people live in the town today, but it does have one thing going for it—it's located on the rolling "Double Nickel," I-55, the upgraded version of Historic Route 66. I must have gone by, myself, ten thousand times before I finally pulled in late last year. I had come on business. I was hot on the trail of William B. Broadwell's outlaw son, Richard L. Broadwell, the "Texas Jack" of the Dalton gang.

Nobody has ever said what the middle initial stood for in Dick Broadwell's name. It is likely that it stood for Latham, a family related to the Broadwells by marriage. Dick's older sister, Kitty, after all, was more formally known as Catherine Latham Broadwell. Or it may have stood for the more prosaic Lee. Then, again, there's just a chance that the tantalizing "L" stood for Lincoln, as in "Honest Abe."

Broadwell lies in Logan County in central Illinois, an area noted for its association with Abraham Lincoln. The county seat, just up the road from Broadwell, is named Lincoln, as a matter of fact. It is the only town named for Abraham Lincoln before he became president. That the town carry Lincoln's name was the suggestion of Robert Latham, Lincoln's good friend and Dick Broadwell's great uncle by marriage.

Dick's grandmother, Margaret Stevenson Broadwell, knew Abraham Lincoln and so did Dick's father in his early days. After Margaret Broadwell lost her husband in a barn-raising accident in late 1824 in Sangamon County, Illinois, she moved to what is now Logan County with young William B. in tow. Here she married Richard Latham, the older brother of the aforesaid Robert B. Latham. Together Richard and Margaret ran a hotel at Elkhart called the "Old Kentucky House." It was here that many of the lawyers who rode the state's vast Eighth Circuit in the 1830s and 1840s stayed for overnight lodging. One of these lawyers was a young, self-taught, jack-legged lawyer named Abraham Lincoln.

Much of the historical record involving the Broadwells is uncertain at best. They are found originally in New Jersey and from thence they came to Illinois by way of Sangamon County in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The Logan County federal census records indicate that in 1860 William B. Broadwell was Broadwell Township's third wealthiest farmer with real estate amounting to 660 acres, valued at $18,000. By this time, William B. had married Elsie H. Broadwell and was the father of two young daughters, Mary, aged three, and two-year-old Kitty. A son, born in 1859, died just five weeks later and, like Billy the Kid, at least to begin with, was named Henry.

It's hard to tell what carried off

Author's Collection

Broadwell, Illinois, located on Historic Route 66.



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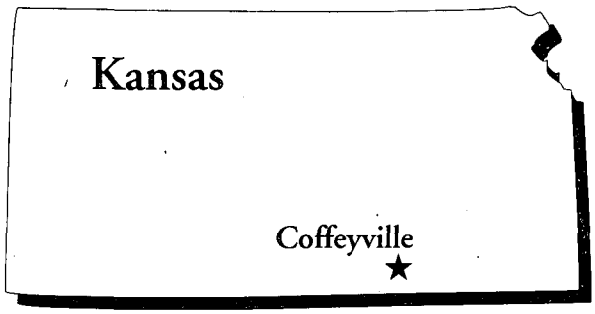
Baby Henry. It may have been that "cold, unseen stranger" that O. Henry refers to as "Mr. Pneumonia" in "The Last Leaf," or, perhaps, some malady more particularly associated with infants, such as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Or maybe somebody around him just forgot to wash their hands in those days when no one had ever heard of Louis Pasteur. In any case, Henry Broadwell sleeps in a tiny, ancient cemetery, amid the primeval woods, atop Elkhart Hill. Dick must have gone up there a hundred times to hunt deer and wonder what it all meant, those whispers of his own mortality. And we today who follow his lawless career have to wonder what might have been had that infant lived. Could he have kept his younger brother on the straight and narrow or would there have been merely one more member of the Dalton Gang—enough to put three men in each bank at Coffeyville, Kansas?

Dick Broadwell was born some time after June 1861, as the Logan County census of June 1870, which lists him as eight, makes clear. It is also clear from the dispatch of an unnamed correspondent from the town of Broadwell at the time of Dick's death that he was twelve by the fall of 1873, when his family moved to Kansas. The exact date of Dick's birth seems forever lost, owing to an unfortunate fire at the Logan County courthouse some years ago. Another fire, this time at the Broadwell Christian Church in 1914, doubtless, claimed the record of his baptism.

Two brothers, Frank and George, followed in 1864 and 1866. Frank disappears from the record at some point between 1873, the year the family moved to Kansas, and 1892, the year Dick was killed at Coffeyville. George, who took Dick's first name for his middle one, drove a buckboard down to Coffeyville from Hutchinson, Kansas, to claim his older brother's body and bury it.

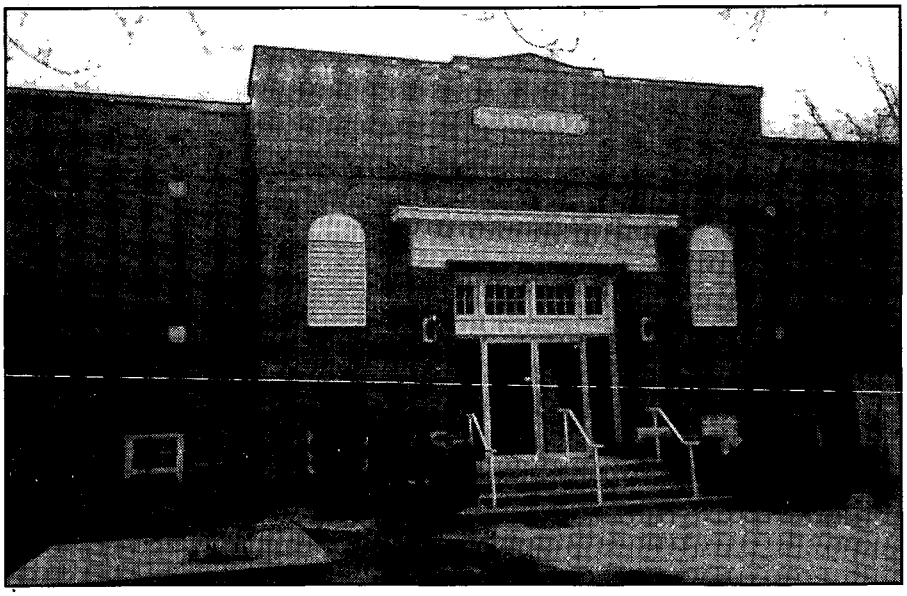
The seventh and last of the Broadwell children was Jennie, born early in 1870. At the time of Dick's death, she would still be single and working as a stenographer for a Hutchinson grain company.




The life of Dick Broadwell is one of those things that the poet Milton speaks of as "unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." There are a couple of good reasons for this. For one thing, Dick didn't live very long. Like John Dillinger, a generation later, he received his mortal wounds in an alley and died at the age of thirty-one. Another reason for the neglect of the outlaw by potential biographers is that he appears never to have killed anyone—an unpardonable failing in a western outlaw. At Coffeyville, Dick wounded a man in the foot, quite deliberately, but the bullet had to bounce off something else first. And, on the one undoubted occasion before Coffeyville when the Dalton gang took a life, the train robbery at Adair, Indian Territory, on July 14, 1892, we have Emmett Dalton's word for it that Dick was with his hero, Bob Dalton, emptying out the express car when the fatal shots were fired at an unassuming physician, probably by Bill Doolin.

Dick lived in Illinois until he was twelve. He must have received a reasonably good grade school education in that time. Certainly, as the oldest son of the township's third wealthiest land owner, he wouldn't have had any trouble being enrolled in the Broadwell grammar school. The school's records going back to that day, unfortunately, no longer exist, but those from the next decade do. One note, written by a schoolmaster on February 15, 1882, describing the recently-deceased Dave Lewis, a student, as "a harmless boy," may have been penned by the anonymous correspondent from Broadwell who, at the time of Dick's death, recalled him as "a very obedient, good boy." Whoever this correspondent was, it was someone well versed in the Broadwell family, as a teacher would be.

In 1892 there were still plenty of people around Broadwell who remembered Dick as a boy. We don't know what tales they told when they heard the news of the outlaw's passing, but we do know



Author's Collection

Dick Broadwell and his numerous siblings attended this school until the fall of 1873. A stone's throw in back of the schoolhouse was the Broadwell farm.



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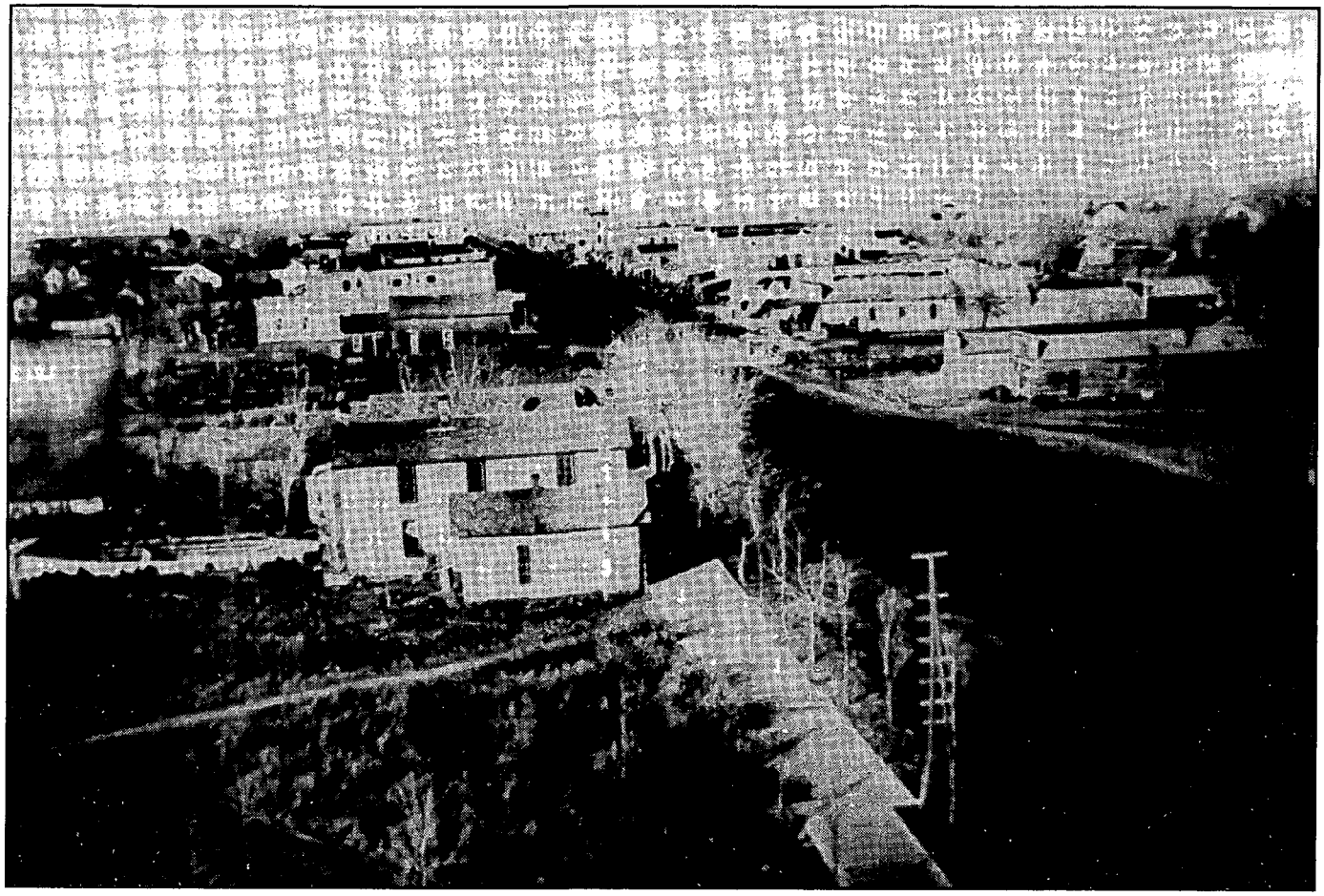

Reno County, Kansas, Historical Society

Hutchinson, Kansas, where the Broadwell family lived from 1873 to the end of the century.

that they talked excitedly all that day—the Saturday after the Coffeyville raid. We also know that a number of businesses in the small town closed out of respect for the town's namesake family.

No detailed reminiscences of Dick before he went down the wrong path have so far surfaced. One writer, however, veteran Kansas newspaperman, T.A. McNeal, mentions Dick in a book written thirty years after Coffeyville. In *When Kansas Was Young,* McNeal saw the youthful Dick Broadwell as an impressionable sort who could easily be taken in by the older, more crafty Bob Dalton. No doubt Bob Dalton exercised an influence over Dick, but the latter was the older of the pair, by about eight years.

On August 14, 1873, William B. Broadwell sold the farm a half mile south of Broadwell, where Dick grew up, to Dorrell Wright, another Logan County pioneer, for $23,000. By the autumn of that year, the Broadwells were out in Kansas. They seem to have gone straight to Reno County, staying first at the now defunct little town of Jordan Springs before finally settling in Hutchinson.

The family had not been in Kansas long when Dr. Lewis Marion Perry, a courageous Civil War veteran and leading light of Broadwell, came out to Kansas to ask for the hand of Kitty Broadwell, Dick's older sister. On January 19, 1874, he got it. Kitty was two weeks beyond her sixteenth birthday; the doctor was thirty-seven.

Kitty returned to Broadwell to live in a small white, frame house with low ceilings which still stands today. Kitty, like her mother, bore her husband seven children, but, tragically, three of these died in infancy. It was while delivering the last that Kitty died on December 14, 1883. Kitty was just twenty-five.

Dr. Perry wired news of the tragedy to Hutchinson and was told by Mr. Broadwell not to do anything until Mrs. Broadwell was there. Two days later, looking very much the worse-for-wear, Elsie Broadwell, age forty-eight, returned to Broadwell to oversee her daughter's funeral. She came alone.

At the time of his sister's death, Dick was a strapping six-foot-four, if one may hazard a guess, judging from a death photo placing his corpse in the proximity of the six-foot Bob Dalton. Dick was fully twenty-two years of age then, and, as the oldest of the Broadwell boys, he should have accompanied his mother. Yet no mention is made of him in the account of Kitty's funeral by the local newspaper. Had he, by 1883, left Hutchinson to take up a life of his own, possibly as a cowboy? Might he even then have taken to the owlhoot trail? One solution, perhaps the best one, is that Dick had come back to Illinois periodically to visit his sister and brother-in-law and

*Please turn to page 35*



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# TRUE WEST LEGENDS

# JOHN SELMAN

## By Leon C. Metz

**November 16, 1839**—John Henry Selman, the youngest of six children, is born in Madison County, Arkansas. His father is Jeremiah Selman, an Englishman.

**1858**—The Selmans move to Grayson County, Texas, where Jeremiah teaches school. He also dies.

**December 15, 1861**—John Selman enlists as a private in the 22nd Regiment of Texas Cavalry. He reports for duty at Fort Washita, Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory.

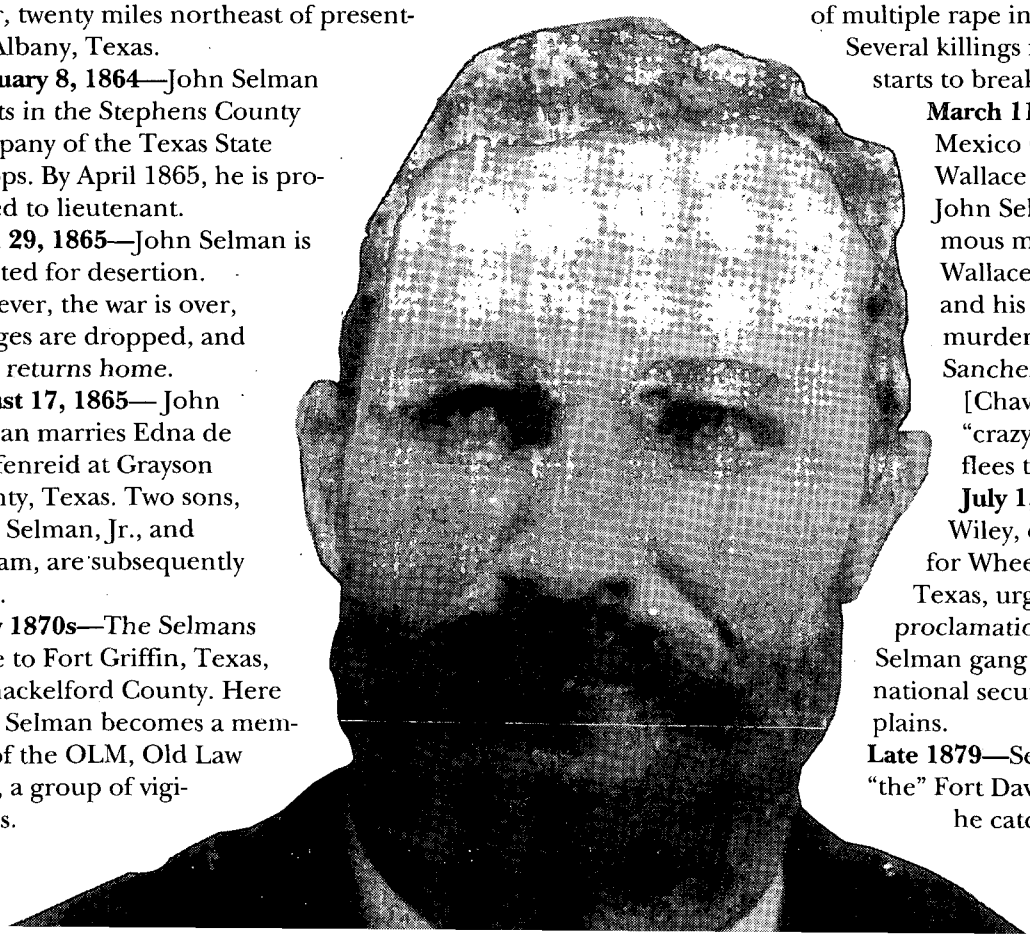
**April 25, 1863**—John Selman deserts the Confederate Army. He, his widowed mother, several sisters, and brother Tom migrate to Fort Davis, Texas, but not to "the" Fort Davis, Texas. Selman's Fort Davis was on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River, twenty miles northeast of present-day Albany, Texas.

**February 8, 1864**—John Selman enlists in the Stephens County Company of the Texas State Troops. By April 1865, he is promoted to lieutenant.

**April 29, 1865**—John Selman is arrested for desertion. However, the war is over, charges are dropped, and John returns home.

**August 17, 1865**—John Selman marries Edna de Graffenreid at Grayson County, Texas. Two sons, John Selman, Jr., and William, are subsequently born.

**Early 1870s**—The Selmans move to Fort Griffin, Texas, in Shackelford County. Here John Selman becomes a member of the OLM, Old Law Mob, a group of vigilantes.



**February 15, 1876**—Gunman and rancher John Larn becomes sheriff of Shackelford County. Selman serves as deputy. The two officers rustle cattle and are implicated in several killings. Prisoners are often removed from jail by the OLM and lynched.

**Late June 1878**—John Larn is shot to death in his own jail by OLM. Selman flees to Lincoln County, New Mexico. Nine counts of cattle rustling are filed against him in Texas. Edna Selman dies.

**July 8, 1878**—John Selman and a gang of outlaws raid the George Coe Ranch in Lincoln County. Selman later kills a man named Hart in a struggle over gang leadership. The outlaws become known as "Selman's Scouts."

**September 1878**—Selman Scouts are accused of multiple rape in Lincoln County. Several killings follow as the gang starts to break up.

**March 11-12, 1879**—New Mexico Governor Lew Wallace places the name John Selman on his infamous most-wanted list. Wallace charges Selman and his gang with the murder of Greggorio Sanchez, two Chavez [Chaves] boys, and a "crazy boy." Selman flees to Texas.

**July 1, 1879**—Moses Wiley, county attorney for Wheeler County, Texas, urges a presidential proclamation declaring the Selman gang a menace to national security on the great plains.

**Late 1879**—Selman goes to "the" Fort Davis, Texas, where he catches smallpox.

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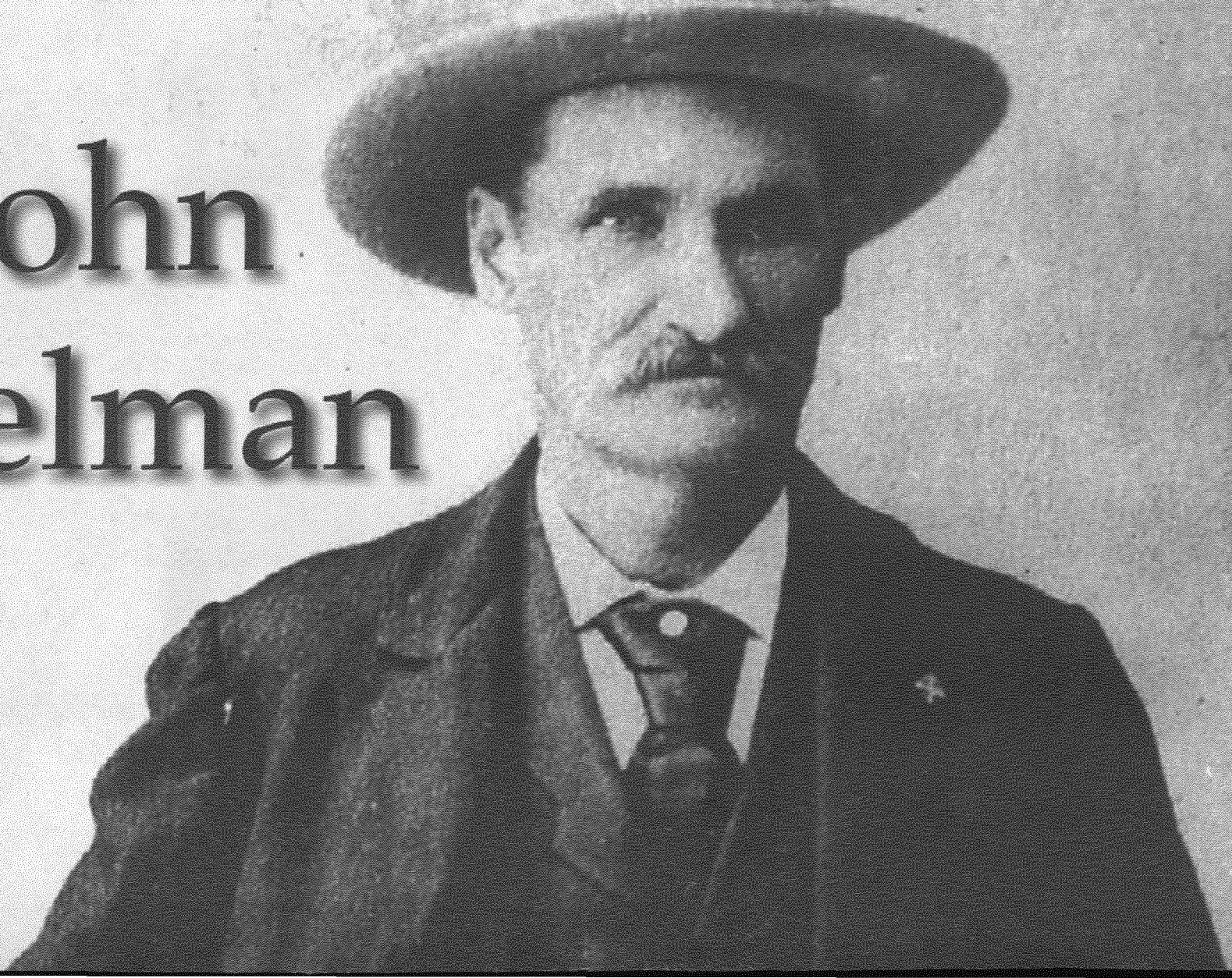
# TRUE WEST LEGENDS:

# John Selman



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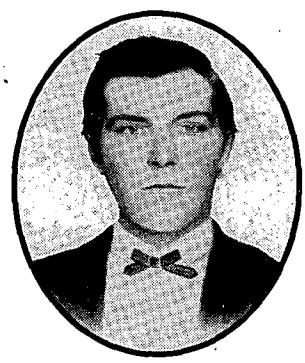
# TRUE WEST LEGENDS

# JOHN SELMAN

**June 26, 1880**—John Selman marries Niconora Zarate, who nurses him back to health.
**June 28, 1880**—The Texas Rangers capture John Selman in Fort Davis and return him to Shackelford County. The authorities allow him to escape rather than stir up old hatreds. Selman, his wife and family, flee to San Pablo, Mexico.
**June 3, 1888**—John Selman and his two sons are in El Paso, Texas, where John works for the American Smelting and Refining Corporation.
**November 3, 1891**—John Selman is mysteriously stabbed in El Paso. He barely survives.
**October 9, 1892**—Niconora Selman, the thirty-two-year-old wife of John Selman, dies in El Paso. She is buried in Concordia Cemetery.
**November 8, 1892**—John Selman is elected constable for Precinct No. 1 in El Paso.
**August 23, 1893**—John Selman, now fifty-three, marries Miss Romula Granadino, the sixteen-year-old ward of Selman's first deputy, W.H. Wheat.
**April 5, 1894**—During a wild gunfight, Constable John Selman kills United States Deputy Marshal and former Texas Ranger Baz Outlaw in the back yard of Tillie Howard's Parlor House in El Paso. Selman—nearly blinded by gunpowder and shot in the leg—is acquitted of murder charges.
**June 21, 1895**—Attorney and ex-gunman John Wesley Hardin entices El Paso police chief Jeff Milton, United States Deputy Marshal George Scarborough, Texas Ranger Frank McMahan, and (possibly) Constable John Selman to lure New Mexico cattle rustler Martin M'Rose across the Rio Grande from Juarez, Mexico. The lawmen shoot M'Rose to death near the railroad bridge spanning the Rio Grande.



*John Wesley Hardin*

**August 19, 1895**— During the afternoon, John Wesley Hardin and John Selman meet in the middle of San Antonio Street and argue. Shortly before 11 PM, Hardin enters the El Paso Acme Saloon. Constable John Selman follows, and immediately fires four shots. The first bullet strikes Hardin in the back of the head, killing him instantly. Selman is arrested and charged with murder.
**February 12, 1896**—A jury votes ten to two for Selman's acquittal. Selman is released on bail to await a new trial.
**April 5, 1896**—Easter Sunday late at night. John Selman has been drinking and gambling in El Paso's Wigwam Saloon. He wanders downstairs into the alley. There he encounters Deputy Marshal George Scarborough. The two argue, and Scarborough puts four bullets in Selman. John dies that afternoon in Sisters Hospital. He is buried somewhere in Concordia Cemetery. Scarborough was tried for murder and acquitted. What the two men argued about will never be known.

**WHAT TO READ:**

*John Selman, Gunfighter,* by Leon C. Metz.
University of Oklahoma Press, 1966.
*John Wesley Hardin: Dark Angel of Texas,* by Leon C. Metz.
Mangan Books, 1997.
*George Scarborough: The Life and Death of a Lawman on the Closing Frontier,* by Robert K. DeArment.
University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.

**WHERE TO GO:**

**Albany and (nearby) Fort Griffin, Texas**: The house and the grave of John Larn are still intact. Little is mentioned about Selman, however.
**Lincoln, New Mexico, and Fort Davis, Texas**: Both of these places have plenty of history, although scant information is included about John Selman.
**El Paso, Texas**: Selman is buried in an unmarked grave in the Catholic portion of Concordia Cemetery. John Wesley Hardin and Martin M'Rose are three graves apart near the Chinese Cemetery portion of Concordia. In downtown El Paso, the Wigwam Saloon building is intact, as is Hardin's residence on Overland Street and his law office on El Paso Street. The Acme Saloon was torn down and replaced by Lerner's Dress Shop.



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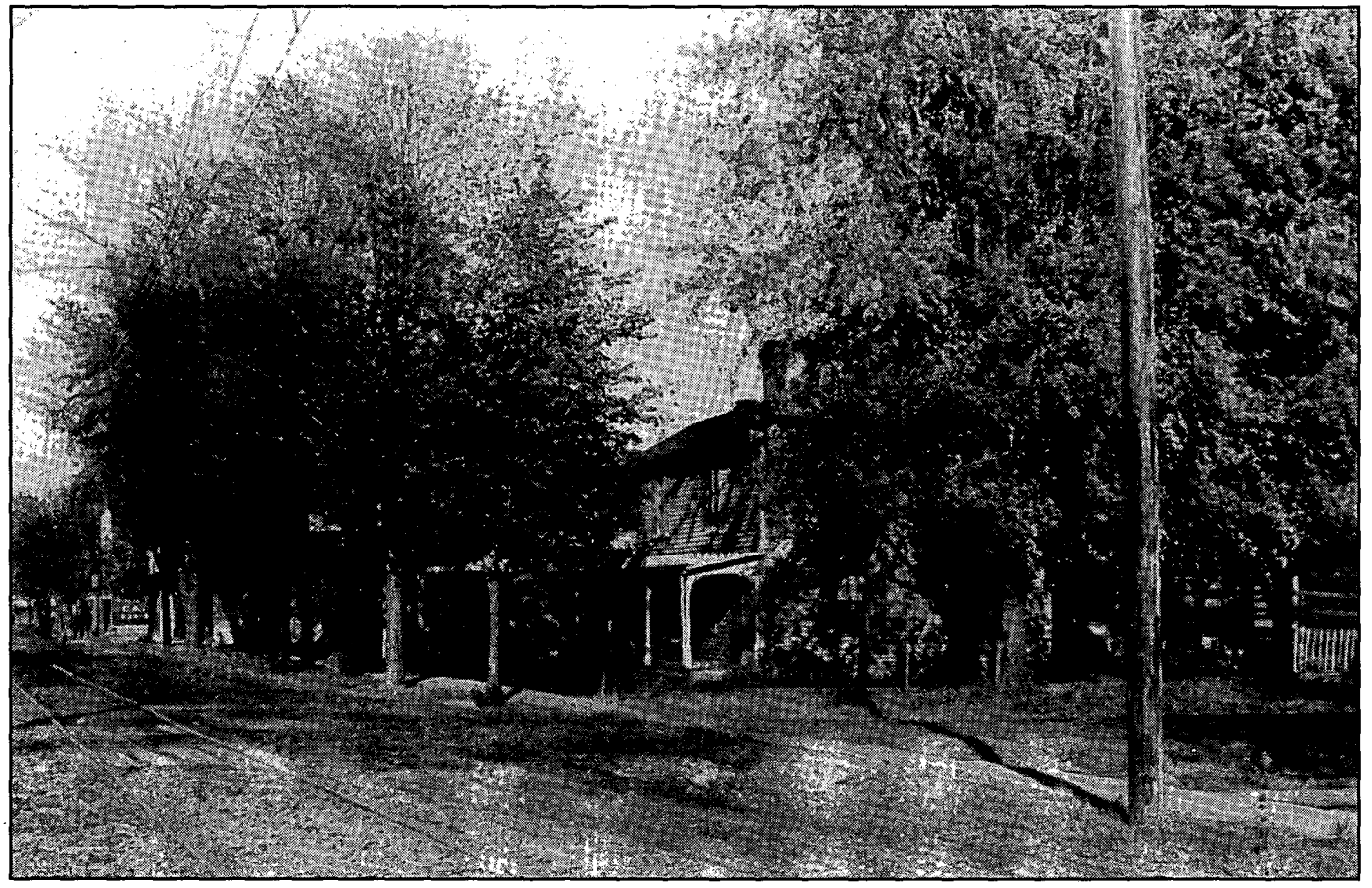

Courtesy of Leola Eiseminger

Dick Broadwell was a frequent visitor to the Broadwell, Illinois, home of his sister Kitty and her husband, Dr. Lewis Marion Perry.

*Continued from page 30*

that he had been in the small, frame house where he nearly would have scraped the ceiling, a short time before her death. He would then have felt that he had already said his last good-byes to his beloved sister. That she was indeed beloved by everyone who knew her is made apparent in the newspaper account of her funeral.

Dr. Perry remarried five years after his wife's death, but he continued to keep in touch with the Broadwells. Only days before the Coffeyville raid, he was out west visiting his former in-laws. William B. and Elsie Broadwell were then living at 526 E. First Street in Hutchinson. Mr. Broadwell was apparently dealing in coal because the city directory for the year following lists him as a coal operator.

Dr. Perry asked William B. specifically about Dick. He was told that Dick was farming in Oklahoma and "prospering nicely."

Folks around Hutchinson, during the early 1890s noticed that Dick was always very well-dressed and very flush. He was a great favorite with the ladies and considered by their families as a great catch. It was believed that he had a ranch near Meade, Kansas, just north of the Oklahoma panhandle.

Actually, there is a farm near Meade and talk has been made of its association with both Dick Broadwell and the Dalton gang. A tunnel runs from the barn to the farmhouse on this property and it has always been supposed that Dick acquired the place from his father. The tunnel, supposedly, was used by the gang so that when they dismounted in the barn, they could enter the house without arousing suspicion among the local residents. The tunnel itself is very much deeper than it was initially. In 1940, in order to accommodate the growing number of tourists who were interested in seeing something connected with the Daltons, the tunnel was enlarged. It has been doing good business ever since.

But it was not Dick Broadwell who farmed on the land, but, rather, John Whipple and his bride, Eva Dalton, a sister to the notorious Daltons. The couple lived here at the time of their marriage in 1888. In 1892, with three of Ma Dalton's boys heaping disgrace on the family name, Eva and her husband moved on. Even then, the couple came under the scrutiny of law enforcement officers wherever they went. Eva, somehow, lived a long life, but, in 1892, it was not easy to be a Dalton. Nor, as it happened, was it easy to be a Broadwell.

There's no telling how the story got started that Dick had a spread at Meade. The Broadwells did not come to Meade when they came to Kansas in late 1873. There simply wasn't time. By the end of that year, as has been said, they were already firmly settled in Hutchinson. Nor



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**JUST WHAT GOT DICK STARTED DOWN THE PRIMROSE PATH TO DESTRUCTION WHICH ENDED AT COFFEYVILLE DOES NOT APPEAR. UNLIKE EMMETT DALTON, HE COULDN'T POINT TO A CROOKED FARO GAME OR SHADY RAILROAD CLICKS.**

does it seem likely that Dick would have lived there independently of his family. He was always associated with Hutchinson, as we shall see, right up to his death. If he oversaw the property at Meade on behalf of his father, no documentation of it has been forthcoming. Most likely, in the early 1890s, Dick was telling people around Hutchinson that he farmed in Meade when he was really riding the range for Oscar Halsell north of Guthrie, Oklahoma. At Halsell's HX Bar ranch, Dick would have fallen in with Bill Doolin, Bill Power, and other recruits of the Dalton gang in the summer of 1891.

That Dick wasn't a charter member of the Dalton gang appears certain. Emmett doesn't mention him as being present at their first foray, a train robbery at Wharton, Indian Territory, in May 1891. He is thus absolved from any of the bloodshed that is sometimes said to have occurred during that robbery or just afterwards. Any recklessness that took place on this occasion can be safely attributed to that mad dog, "Black Face" Charley Bryant, who would himself be killed shortly afterwards.

Just what got Dick started down the primrose path to destruction which ended at Coffeyville does not appear. Unlike Emmett Dalton, he couldn't point to a crooked faro game or shady railroad clicks. Dick came from a fine family, a family, incidentally, in which the women seem at all times more admirable than the men. There is, however, a story.

Dick had quite a wad on him one day, the story goes, when he was staying at a hotel in Fort Worth, Texas. He also had a girl. The girl up and left him, but not before cleaning him out. The story may be true, but as far as I know it did not surface until seven decades after the event when Harold Preece mentioned it in his *The Dalton Gang*.

While it has always been standard practice to downplay anything Emmett Dalton ever said about anything, it must be admitted that he is our only source for particulars concerning a number of things. According to Emmett, Dick Broadwell and Bill Power were a couple of for-sure wildcats. Indeed, compared to these two, brother Bob comes across as mild-mannered and the soul of Christian charity and patience. After the train robbery which took place at Leliaetta, Indian Territory, September 15, 1891, Dick

Author's Collection

William B. Broadwell owned several thousand acres of land between Elkhart, Illinois, and Broadwell, Illinois. This view of the Broadwell farm was taken looking north toward the town of Broadwell.



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was in a fighting mood. The gang had overcome some stiff resistance from a posse on board the train. Bob thought it was time to lay low but Dick, according to Emmett, protested.

"Aw, hell," Broadwell says, "that bunch ain't got nerve enough to fight a sick cat."

Emmett also gives us a more or less reliable list of the gang's personnel. There were the three Dalton brothers—Bob, Grat, and Emmett—George "Bitter Creek" Newcomb, "Black Faced" Charley Bryant, Bill Power, Charley Pierce, William McElhanie, Dick Broadwell, and Bill Doolin. At their first train robbery at Wharton (Perry), Indian Territory, on May 10, 1891, someone named "Six Shooter Jack" was loitering around town a number of days previous to the robbery. "Six Shooter Jack" has never been identified but he was likely "Black Faced" Charley Bryant or William McElhanie, alias "Narrow-Gauge" Kid. Whoever "Six Shooter Jack" was, he wasn't Dick Broadwell. It seems pretty certain that Dick was recruited only after the Wharton robbery, probably owing to the death of "Black Faced" Charley Bryant in August 1891. It also seems likely that he was accompanied by Bill Power and Bill Doolin. At least, that's the impression Emmett gives in his two books on the Daltons.

Dick's career as an outlaw probably wasn't a long one, but it does seem to have lasted long enough to provide him with his fair share of sobriquets. He was best known as "Texas Jack." Emmett, in the wake of the Coffeyville disaster, wanted him known as "Jake Moore," until he finally fessed up. By that time, Dick had already been identified as Dick Broadwell. Perhaps the oddest of Dick's assortment of nicknames is "Jack of Diamonds."

Apparently Dick was in the habit of singing this old spiritual while on the trail and was so called due to this practice. But it is the source from which our knowledge of this comes that is most surprising. Thomas Beer, the earliest biographer of Stephen Crane and for whose biography Joseph Conrad contributed an introduction, saw fit to devote three pages to the Coffeyville raid in his 1927 book, *The Mauve Decade,* a history of the 1890s. A footnote at the bottom of the first of these pages informs us of this nickname of Dick's. Beer, as Crane biographers know, was treacherous when it came to sources. He burned many of Crane's letters and we have only his word for it that they ever existed. He probably came by his information about Dick from Jack Siefert, who was a child at the time of the Dalton raid. (The song, "Jack of Diamonds," is featured in Walter Hill's 1980 James-Younger gang film *The Long Riders.*)

Emmett's first book, *Beyond the Law,* gives us some light, possibly fanciful, but more than likely not, about Dick. We learn that Dick knew a number of Cheyennes in Indian Territory and that he could speak their language, something apparently nobody else in the gang could do. There is even an amusing incident involving Cheyennes and cavalry in which Dick plays a key role, along with Grat Dalton. The incident took place sometime after the Adair robbery when a group of soldiers had orders to put some "Sooners" off their land. Whatever their purpose, the Indians did not appreciate seeing the soldiers. All eyes were on Dick in this episode and when he fired his Winchester to warn the soldiers not to approach, the Indians misconstrued this gesture as a signal to open fire. Fortunately, no one was hurt and Grat got a lot of satisfaction putting the spurs to one terrified trooper.

It is often said that had the Daltons not died so spectacularly at Coffeyville, no one would have heard of them today. That they died in one of the bloodiest shoot-outs in the Old West is an absolute fact, but, nevertheless, they were pretty fair hands at train robbery. While their solo effort at bank robbery was a dismal failure, nobody—not even Jesse and the Youngers—were more proficient at robbing a train. The Daltons, after all, outwitted and outgunned an armed and alerted posse at Adair. Jesse never had to overcome any kind of resistance during a train robbery.

It may be argued that only a bunch of glorified amateurs could have bungled the robbery at Coffeyville so badly. Nevertheless, Bob Dalton just may have taken stock of the fiasco at Northfield, Minnesota, by the James-Younger gang when he drew up his plans to hit Coffeyville.

The robbery of the First National Bank of Northfield on September 7, 1876, took place at two in the afternoon, a time when plenty of people were up and around. The Daltons struck at Coffeyville just after 9:30 AM. It was Bob's intention to catch the town napping so that no one would get hurt. At least that's what Emmett said, and he was probably telling at least half the truth.

All together, the Daltons hit four trains, if one excludes the train robbery on February 6, 1891, at Alila, in Tulare County, California. Most writers, especially Nancy Samuelson, who has done the most research on the subject, defend the Daltons' innocence in this affair. These train robberies took place from May 1891 to July 1892, better than two per year. The last one, at Adair, got pretty uncomfortable with all that lead from the deputy United States marshals flying around and it started Bob to thinking. Since train robbing was becoming a bit unsafe, perhaps the gang should try banks.

Emmett later said that the idea of robbing both banks at Coffeyville was to make an early retirement in South America possible for Ma Dalton's three bad boys. Taking up a life in South America has been the immemorial dream of outlaws from the days of the Daltons and the Wild Bunch to John Dillinger. Butch and Sundance were among the handful to actually make it there, but after falling on sufficiently hard times, they inevitably fell back on their old ways.

Interestingly, only the three Daltons seem to have warmed to Bob's retirement plan. Power and Dick demurred. One wonders what these two saw in store for themselves


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down the road after successfully looting Coffeyville.

But, if retirement to South America didn't appeal to Dick, the idea of the dual bank robbery in Coffeyville did. Emmett says that not one outlaw in the band showed any enthusiasm for the notion, save Dick Broadwell alone. And, somehow, then, Bob and Dick persuaded the others to join them for this last adventure—the one "to beat Jesse James."

On the morning of October 5, 1892, the Dalton gang, composed of five or possibly six riders, rode into Coffeyville from the west. Once they alighted from their horses, only five men can be accounted for. Because laborers were working near the banks and piles of rock cluttered the street, the gang hitched their horses in an alley off Walnut Street, hundreds of feet from the plaza where the two banks stood.

Emmett, writing twenty-six years later, remembered that he and Bob walked in front, the other three following. Sources from that day state that three marched in front and two behind. One would think that Emmett could be trusted to get this little detail right, but no other writer has ever followed him in this. Even the make-up of the two groups varies. Paul I. Wellman, in his fascinating *Dynasty of Western Outlaws,* has the three brothers in the lead with Broadwell and Power following. That is perhaps how it should have been.

The three Daltons made some attempt to disguise their features from their fellow Coffeyvillians by donning false beards and mustaches. Since Dick and Bill Power were not known around town, neither wore a false beard or mask. Or maybe Dick did, again taking his cue from Bob.

When the band got to the C.M. Condon Bank, overlooking the plaza to the south and standing where Walnut and Union streets come together, they split up. Grat Dalton, Bill Power, and Dick went inside the Condon Bank, while Bob and Emmett adjourned to the First National Bank across Union Street.

Once inside the Condon Bank, Dick stood at the southeast door and Power stationed himself at the southwest door. Between the two doors, were two big plate glass windows which looked out on the plaza. Across Union Street to the southeast was Isham's Hardware store from which a great deal of deadly fire was to come during the next twelve minutes. Incredibly, though, no one would die inside that bank, not even an innocent bystander, though plainly there was no attempt to avert this.

**HE POINTED HIS WINCHESTER AT HIM AND RAGED: "GOD DAMN YOU! I BELIEVE YOU ARE LYING TO ME. I'VE A MIND TO PUT A BULLET THROUGH YOU. OPEN IT UP OR I WILL SHOOT YOU. YOU'VE BEEN BLOWING TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO...."**

Grat was in charge at the Condon. All went well until he asked Cashier C.M. Ball about the burglar-proof vault. Ball said that the vault had a timelock on it and was not due to open until 9:45. He was lying through his teeth, knowing how precious time was during a holdup.

"That is only three minutes. We can wait," Grat said.

By some accounts, beginning with the usually reliable David Stewart Elliott, the time involved was actually ten minutes. I have followed "Eyewitness's" lead in this, as I do not believe Grat would have waited ten minutes for anything. In any case, it was during these few crucial moments that the alarm was given that the Daltons were robbing the banks. The hardware stores were now handing out guns and ammunition to anyone who was willing to meet the challenge.

After a moment of waiting, Grat somewhat redeemed himself for being taken in by Ball. He pointed his Winchester at him and raged: "God damn you! I believe you are lying to me. I've a mind to put a bullet through you. Open it up or I will shoot you. You've been blowing too much about what you can do...."

Two customers now entered the Condon and it was at this point, strangely enough, that the citizens began to open fire. Broadwell was hit in his gun arm (some accounts say Power was the one hit). It is "Eyewitness" again who provides the most detail. Dick, though in evident pain, was quite composed and warned cashier Ball and proprietor Charles Carpenter to get down "or else you will get killed by some of these people."

In line with this remark is the recollection of Jack Long in 1949, more than half a century later:

"I could see the Condon bank and everybody was shooting at it. While the shooting was going on, Jack [sic] Broadwell, one of the Dalton gang, came out of the bank. He walked back and forth in front of the bank for a while, looking in all directions. Broadwell was sure a wild-looking human, and I heard he was just as wild as he looked."

If Dick was pacing back and forth in front of the bank, it must have been at a time before bullets were in the air or surely this big man would have been hit. Probably he was surveying the scene moments before the trouble began. Long, more than fifty years later, may have turned things around in his recollections. Otherwise, Dick was one reckless bank robber.

As with everything else connected with this bank robbery, there are different versions about who shot whom. Dick seems to have been the one who shot Isham's clerk, T. Arthur Reynolds, in the foot. Of course, since Reynolds was firing at him at the time, he can hardly be said to have behaved reprehensibly. But, in the general run of accounts, it is Bill Power, not Dick Broadwell, who takes the fight out of "the intrepid Reynolds."

Meanwhile, across Union Street



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at the First National Bank, things were progressing more smoothly. Bob and Emmett had no timelocks to wait for, but did see fit, after the manner of all robbers, to deliver themselves of an onerous load of profanity. They had one thing going for them over there that the other bandits didn't have—a back door that they knew about. A back door can be a pretty valuable item when the whole town is pouring lead through the front door. Bob and Emmett availed themselves of this escape plan and all but escaped because of it. Had they hitched their horses on Union Street, as originally planned, they, if not the whole band, would have gotten clear of the deadliest part of the assault leveled at them. Interestingly enough, cashier Tom Ayers played a waiting game with Bob in the First National Bank. He took his time hauling the money out of the vault until Bob caught on and hurried him along.

Bob had Emmett carry the sack of ill-gotten gains, while he snapped shots with his Winchester, sometimes to intimidate, more often to dispatch, any opposition. Three armed and courageous citizens met their fate at Bob's hands, one of whom knew him quite well. An equal number were wounded by his deadly fire. Aware of the predicament the other bandits were in, Bob and Emmett tried to cover them in their flight from the Condon to the alley where the gang's horses were tied.

In 1918, Emmett reported that Bob and he came down Maple Street to the alley. Maple Street was more than a half a block to the west of where both contemporary accounts have the two intersecting the alley. Apparently they reached the alley before the rest of the gang because Emmett said that as they went over their original route, they were approached by little Bobby Wells with a .22 pistol. Bob politely spanked his behind and sent him home.

When the other three reached the alley, each of them had been shot. Power tried to mount his horse and got shot in the arm. Grat had been hit coming out of the bank and someone so shouted in glee. He may already have been mortally wounded by the time he got to the alley. Dick Broadwell was hit early on in the arm and perhaps more seriously, for Emmett said so forty years later in a newspaper interview. "Eyewitness" reported that Joe Uncapper shot Broadwell from an upstairs window in the Condon Building as he ran from the bank. The outlaw then crawled behind some loose boards in the Long-Bell lumber yard.

Now that all the outlaws were trapped in the alley, the shooting became even more intense. The town marshal, Charles T. Connelly, unarmed at the start of the day, was carrying a rifle into the alley, looking the wrong way when Grat shot him in the back. Grat was in no position to take prisoners. Emmett never could figure out who shot the town marshal, whether townsmen or "one of us." No one else ever voiced a doubt about who shot Connelly that day.

Because two horses hitched to an oil wagon interfered with his progress, Dick killed them both. ("Eyewitness" says it was Power.) Both Dick and Emmett mounted at the same time. The rest lay dead or wounded in the alley. Power was the first to die. He was shot as he stepped away from a door that would not open for him in that deadly alley.

**POWER WAS THE FIRST TO DIE. HE WAS SHOT AS HE STEPPED AWAY FROM A DOOR THAT WOULD NOT OPEN FOR HIM IN THAT DEADLY ALLEY.**

John Kloehr now shot Grat in the throat. The bullet snapped the outlaw's neck like a twig.

Kloehr then put a bullet through Bob's chest as he sat wounded on a pile of stones in the alley. Bob had just *enough* stamina for one more shot which he aimed at Kloehr. Some say it went high, others low.

Dick and Emmett, meanwhile, were mounted and riding out of the alley. Emmett held the grain sack full of about $20,000 of First National booty. Seeing that Bob was not riding, he turned back to get him. As he leaned down from his mount to lift his slain brother and hero up, he was felled by a blast from barber Carey Seaman's shotgun. Emmett, though terribly wounded in this endeavor, would not get credit for it sixty years later when Burton Rascoe wrote the foreword to a 1954 reprint of "Eyewitness's" *The Dalton Gang.* Rascoe thought the incident sounded too much like Cole Younger's rescue of brother Bob at Northfield for it to be true.

Dick Broadwell rode about a half mile out on Eighth Street before succumbing to his many wounds. His horse stood faithfully over him when the posse found him. "Eyewitness" says that he was shot as he rode west down the alley by a Coffeyville youth, T.N. Russell, son of G.W. Russell, whose yard bordered on the alley. This yard is at least a hundred feet from where the gang's horses were tied that morning and, if Dick was shot here, he would have had to turn north afterward before going west again to end up where he did. This seems a bit much for a man practically dead when he got in the saddle.

Coffeyville historian and author Lue Barndollar points out that the young Russell's name is not on the honored roster of the town's "defenders." All in all, it appears that Dick was shot by everybody in town but T.N. Russell.

For the next several hours the outlaws lay unburied while photographs were taken. The bodies were placed on boards in the alley, laying side by side in front of the city jail. One famous shot shows the slain outlaws being studied by a lad peeping through a hole in a fence. This lad, who appears to be about eight or nine, has never been identi-


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Reno County, Kansas, Historical Society

Dick Broadwell was buried in an unmarked grave in Eastside Cemetery, Hutchinson, Kansas, a few days after the Coffeyville raid.

fied. Another youngster, though, John R. Tackett, fanned the wounded Emmett Dalton as he lay in the street full of wounds and flies.

The identities of the outlaws presented a problem at first. The Daltons, of course, once stripped of their phony whiskers, were no problem, since they were well known in Coffeyville. But Dick and Bill Power were not well known. Emmett, furthermore, complicated matters by referring to them by their aliases, "Jake Moore" and "Tom Evans." While the authorities were getting nowhere with Emmett, out on the street ghoulish photographs were being taken of Bob and Grat. They were held up like a pair of grisly trophies of the chase by clusters of townsmen. A hundred years later, the pictures are a reminder of the only less than admirable behavior by Coffeyville citizens that October day.

It was while the outlaws were laid out to be photographed that a Hutchinson bricklayer with the unlikely name of William Tell Jones recognized Dick Broadwell.

"Great jumpin' catfish!" Tell exclaimed. "That's Dick Broadwell. He's from Hutchinson, same as me."

It was not a smart thing to say under the circumstances. Tell was promptly thrown in Marshal Connelly's jail, apparently for no better reason than having known an outlaw at some point in his life. He was a guest of Montgomery County for the next two or three days. The authorities probably didn't believe his name either.

William and Ben Dalton, who came to Coffeyville with their mother shortly after the tragedy, skirted the trouble Jones had seen by talking with Deputy Marshal Chris Madsen before coming to town. They then sought permission of the mayor. From this, it can be seen that Coffeyville had an attitude after the raid.

Dick had $92.40 on his person when killed. This and his faithful mount were taken by the same Coffeyville citizen in spite of protests by Dick's brother, George, and brother-in-law, E.B. Wilcox. This action seems odd in view of the fact that the estates of both Bob and Grat Dalton were put up for auction. In any case, George Broadwell and his brother-in-law declined to pursue the matter at length.

George and Wilcox, husband to the oldest of the Broadwell children, Mary, came to Coffeyville two days after the raid. George worked for the Boston Tea Company of Chicago and Wilcox was a leading grocer in Hutchinson. For a ten-dollar fee the two had Dick's body dug up out of the potter's field, where it was buried with Power, and after outfitting it in a fine, new suit, took it back to Hutchinson to be buried at the Eastside Cemetery.

Like Doc Holliday, Baron Lamm, Gerald Chapman, and "Three-Fingered" Jack Hamilton, Dick is buried in an unmarked grave, the sad lot of really hard cases. But none of the other desperadoes had anyone to look out for their interests when they passed on, so it is understandable that they were buried in this fashion. Dick, on the other hand, had family who made special arrangements to have him buried properly. It is likely, therefore, as some have suggested, that Dick is buried in the Wilcox plot in a grave with a fictitious name.

When news of Coffeyville reached central Illinois, Colonel Robert B. Latham, Abraham Lincoln's friend and a Broadwell relative by marriage, read with horror the remarks in the local paper that recounted this relationship. He did what any upstanding citizen would do, faced with such an affront in his later years—he denied the relationship and demanded an apology from the newspaper. One week after the raid, he got his apology.

The stigma of having a black sheep in the family went hard on the Broadwell and Wilcox families. By the turn of the century, both had moved away from Hutchinson to disappear in that limbo reserved for the family members of someone who was bad, but not bad enough.

Patrick Waddle, a descendant of Bill Power, told me that at the centennial of the Coffeyville raid, in October 1992, the outlaw families were all represented, with the exception of the Broadwells. One can only hope that some day someone will turn up who knows the further adventures of the Broadwell family after Hutchinson and, dare we hope, will produce a photo of the handsome young outlaw when he was alive.



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# Jim White Cave Cowboy

## By Peter Hildebrandt

Heat waves shimmered above New Mexico's Guadalupe hills as a young rider savored the shade of a cactus. The cowboy wet his throat with the tepid water in his canteen—not as good as cold, but better than nothing. It had been a long, rough afternoon searching for stray cattle and the ranch hand's body ached. It was time to head home and forget this day.

Suddenly an odd sight in the distance took the cowboy's mind off his troubles. A strange cloud spiraled up above the horizon, making him wonder if a volcano had just started erupting. Not being in an area prone to volcanoes made him think again. It couldn't be a dust devil. The shape stayed in place and didn't sweep across the land like one of those whirlwinds.

The cowboy started hiking over to see what the form could be. The walk over rough, prickly land brought him to a tiny open area. After getting his bearings, he stared at the sky above.

Smoke didn't fill the air. The twilight rippled with waves of bats literally pouring from a huge dark hole in the mountainside. Though he'd heard of this hole and never had a desire to explore it, the quantity of winged animals erupting from inside made him wonder just how large a space housed all the bats.

All the while, trying to fathom its size, he inched forward through the cactus tangles until he gasped at what lay below—a great gap that looked bottomless. He lit a fire of dried cactus pieces and shoved it over the edge.

The light got smaller and smaller as it fell. When it tumbled to the rocks below he judged the fall at least 200 feet. Kicking the rest of the fire into the hole he again stood transfixed by the disappearing light.

Jim White.

Author's collection

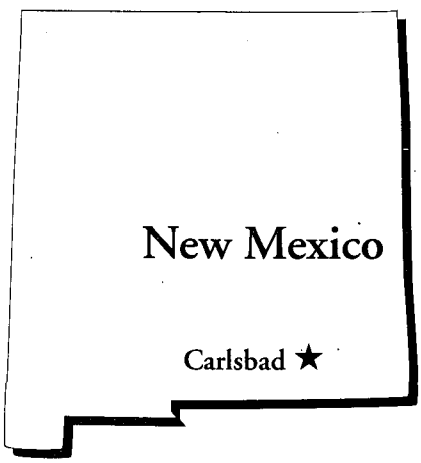
The fire spooked the bats, stopping their flow. But once the fire died, they swirled above as strong as before. The darkening sky eventually drove the young man back to the ranch house, three miles away.

Thoughts of his discovery never strayed far from the cowboy's mind. He decided to explore what he'd found and after three days he gathered a lantern, ax, rope, and wire and headed out without telling anyone.

Mid-afternoon sun shone directly on the shaft bottom when he reached the cave and to the right of the bottom he noticed a tunnel opening. After making a crude ladder from sticks, rope, and wire, he lowered himself in the huge chasm. He touched down on the cave bottom—he thought. It was actually the floor of a ledge perched far above the bottom.

Instead of climbing back up and lengthening his ladder so he could descend, he decided to climb below clinging to the wall. Curiosity defeated caution, despite the fact that he'd told no one of his find nor his attempt at exploration.

As he made his way below, he found a tunnel leading to a cave whose size he'd never dreamed of. He stumbled upon formations at his feet, while all around glassy pools



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shimmered and rock tubes rang out xylophone-like at the flick of his fingers. The wonders surrounding him robbed him of his fear until all at once his lantern died.

Panic swept over him like an instant fever. Then he remembered he'd filled his canteen with extra oil for just such an emergency. Filling up his lantern in the blackness proved daunting. It felt like hours before he was again able to light the lantern. His own clothes felt like they held as much fuel as he poured in the lantern. One wise choice he'd made was to break off pieces of the rock formations he'd passed to leave a path to find his way back out.

The whole way back one fear dogged him: what if he lost his trail back? He'd kept secret his intentions back at his ranch so no one would have a clue where to search for him. He kept putting the thought from his mind as he pressed on.

But as soon as he thought he'd let go this fear, it returned even stronger. Despite the coolness of the cave he noticed sweat streaming down his spine. Something told him to run. Sputtering and scrambling, the cowboy charged back to get out even sooner. No sooner had he started than his head smacked a sharp rock form along his path.

The bashing suddenly calmed him. He started talking to himself to quell the creeping hopelessness seeping in around him, and groped through the dim light to find the markers he'd left behind. Finally, he found the stone pieces and forgot his feeling of giving up.

Eventually things grew lighter until he reached a spot where sunlight streamed in. With tears filling his eyes, the explorer struggled up the rock wall to his rope and wire ladder.

Back at the surface the sun warmed him as he took stock of what he'd just done. Looking back at the hole in the mountain, instead of seeing a forbidding place that just had driven him out into the sun in fear, he vowed to return and explore the whole thing.

The man who emerged from the huge cave that afternoon in 1901 was Jim White. The cave he'd just gazed upon is now known as Carlsbad Caverns.

Eventually Jim filled his fellow cowboys with his talk of the caves. It must have seemed strange to those men to have the usually silent White chattering away about some crazy cave he'd discovered under the cactus-covered earth.

"Never mind bats in some cave," said one, "you've got bats in your belfry, Jim."

"No. Wait," he begged. "That place by the mountain, I know you've seen it. You just weren't there at the right time. About sundown's when the bats fill the air above the opening. Now, I've been in the cave and it's more beautiful than you can ever imagine. If you'll just go with me you can see for yourself."

But no matter how he tried for some reason they thought he dreamt the whole place up. Finally he gave up on them and turned quiet once more.

Not long after this a Mexican teenager employed at the ranch house let Jim know in his best English that he'd go along to the cave. Everyone, including White knew the boy only as "Pothead." Jim was thrilled to finally have someone accompany him, even if it was just a Mexican boy.

Five days after he first explored the caverns, White returned with a couple of torches, a bag of food, another canteen of oil, and the game Pothead. The creaky ladder Jim descended gave Pothead second thoughts.

Jim White went down first while Pothead followed warily. Kerosene torches let them travel quicker than when Jim had struggled with his lantern.

White and Pothead stayed in the cave three days. On the third day, after weary hours of exploring, the young cowboy decided to take a rest on a nearby ledge. Turning around to get comfortable he shuddered at the sight before him. A human skull stared at him from across the ledge. After gaining his composure he crawled over to see it. Just below the skull lay an entire skeleton—one nearly twice the size of a normal man.

When he lifted a huge femur the entire bone crumbled into countless pieces. A drop of water splashed his hand and gave him a clue to what happened. Lime in the water caused the bones to swell to double their size, yet weaken into crumbs. The skull however, escaped the water damage and remained normal size.

When Jim proposed carrying the skull back with them, the young Mexican refused to take the bag if the skull remained inside.

By that afternoon Jim felt his back start to burn and realized the cause. The kerosene had leaked from its can, drenching his shirt. As he started scrambling to get from the ledge and try to strip off his fuel-soaked clothes, Pothead tried to keep up.

Unaware of Jim's problem, the boy's torch brushed Jim's back, setting the cowboy ablaze.

A jump from the ledge meant death. Jim chose to dash across the ledge, grab the can, and throw his hat on top to try to keep it from exploding. The boy stripped his own coat off and threw it over Jim's shoulders. A buckskin vest saved White from certain death but his badly blistered back now drove them from the cave sooner than they'd planned.

The skull and wonders of the cave did little to convince the other ranch hands to visit Jim's discovery. Even an old friend refused Jim's offer of a guided tour. The friend took Jim to the local library where he showed the cowboy photos of a better-known cave.

"See this about Mammoth Cave, in Kentucky? You couldn't have found anything comparing to that!"

"Just come on with me, you'll see. I promise," Jim said.

"I can't right now, pretty busy. Believe you've found a cave, Jim. Can't help thinking that it looks bigger to you than it really is."

Before they parted Jim couldn't contain his frustration.

"Just want to say one thing more. Someday you'll know I tell the truth.


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Someday you'll see my cave. When you do I want to be there looking at the expression on your face."

It would be a longer wait than Jim dreamed. For years he'd live with the skeptical taunts of coworkers.

In late 1901 a stranger to Carlsbad, Abijah Long, would finally show an interest in Jim White's "bat cave." It wasn't really the cave that interested the newcomer, but the bats and their droppings.

"Bat manure's the most prized fertilizer of all, also called 'guano' and I'd like to see this cave of yours that's loaded with it. Could you take me there?" asked Long.

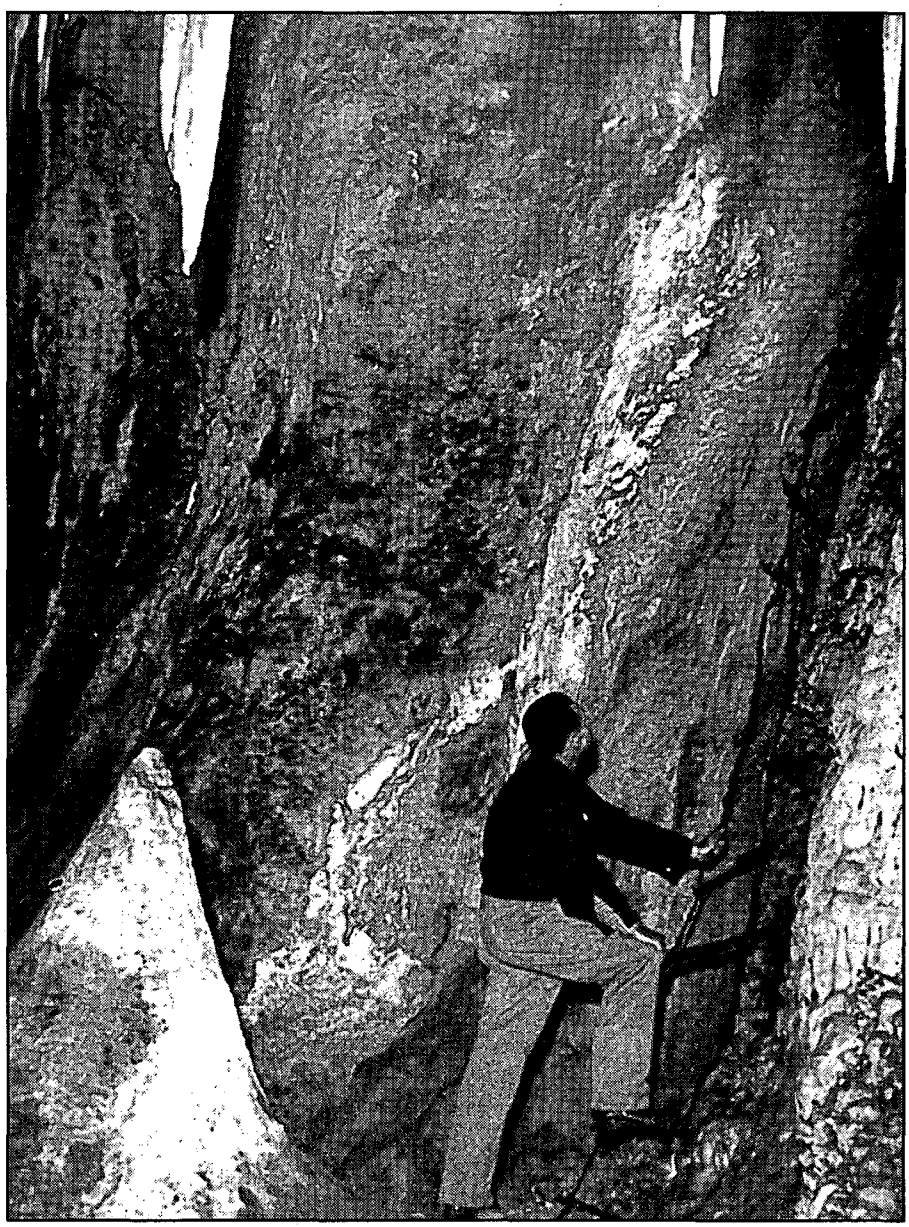
This wasn't what Jim expected but when he showed the bat cave section to Long, the man's eyes lit up. California fruit growers gladly paid ninety dollars a ton for the stuff. In 1903, operations began to mine the "white gold," with Jim as foreman. Now he'd work ever nearer to his cave.

After sinking a shaft into the ground near the cave entrance, a transport system was rigged to move the stuff up and out of the cave floor. Jim helped rig the system by using an old wagon axle, an iron bucket, and a gasoline winch.

Before the guano could be freighted west to California, mules hauled the wagons to the Carlsbad freight yard. Over the next twenty years some 100,000 tons of guano came from the cave. But it may not have been as lucrative as imagined at first. Over the years, seven different companies tried their hand at the operation.

Eventually Jim told his wife, Fannie, he'd build trails all through the cave to make sure all the visitors —when they finally came—could hike through his wondrous cave safely. He hammered old Ford axles into cracks in the cave rock and tied thick wire between them to create a railing, and then he mapped out his underground trails to make sure they led to the most breathtaking spots.

As the years passed Jim managed to lead more and more groups through his cave. Visitors rode the old bat guano buckets in pairs when



Author's collection

The original ladder, made by Jim White, used to explore the lower levels of the Carlsbad Caverns.

Jim started up the winch. Once, two men got stuck when the engine stalled for a time. After this Jim only loaded one at a time in the bucket.

But another incidence of the bucket stalling occurred, as Jim White explains:

"A priest that weighed 300 pounds went as far as the Devil's Den' took a look a'things, and gave up the trip. When the man was about half way up, something happened to the engine and we had to stop and leave him where he was in his bucket for a minute or two. Then we started to let him down under perfect control of the brakes, and I could hear him mumblin' something like a prayer.

"We never did have any accidents around the cave except once in the mining days when a drunk man come stumblin' along and fell heels over head into the shaft. I was froze with fear. But the bucket loaded with filled sacks happened to be coming up and was just enterin' the hole in the roof. Then up came the bucket and clingin' on was our friend—when he put his foot on solid ground he sure was sober!"

Word spread about Jim's cave, and soon people streamed in from all around the region. Jim started charging admission, and Fannie would furnish food and lodging for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many of the cave sightseers. Jim gave free tours to families in dire straits and the occasional writers and newspaper people who dropped by.

By 1923, word reached the General Land Office in Washington, DC, and an investigator came to see for himself if the cave "was of much importance." Mr. Robert Holley left Jim and his cave tour, with a report concluding:

"It appears this cave is of such wonderful character as to be worthy of establishment as a national monument."

Soon a stream of officials made their way to Jim White's corner of the country and his cave, now growing famous. One man, a government geologist named Willis T. Lee, may have had designs on the fame he predicted for the place. Jim was surprised when he heard Lee proclaim that an entrance tunnel ought to be drilled through the mountain to the cave and named "Lee's Tunnel."

Lee would go on to shoot photographs for two National Geographic articles. One day while he was at the cave, Jim noticed Lee starting to conduct a party into the cave and wondered why he didn't merit an invitation.

After finishing lunch, Lee told the group: "From here on we'll traverse a section of the cave human feet never touched."

With this heady declaration still ringing in their ears, the party pressed on eagerly. After about a half mile of caving, something drawn on the wall caught their attention—an arrow. On closer inspection, bringing their lights near the wall, words became visible below the arrow: "This way out, Jim White."

On October 23, 1923, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed Jim White's cave, Carlsbad Cave National Monument. Through the 1920s Jim still helped with the cave, becoming chief ranger in 1926 and continuing to build new trails.

Courtesy National Parks Service

Jim White, the original Carlsbad Caverns guide, and Colonel Thomas Boles, Carlsbad superintendent, 1927-46.

When he left his ranger position in 1929, he requested the job of "chief explorer" from the park superintendent and was led to believe he'd get it.

But this dream never materialized. After petitions, newspaper articles, and letters were sent to the National Park Service, Jim found nothing but frustration when dealing with the bureaucracy that had taken over the cave, the very cave he'd tried to bring to the world's attention for nearly thirty years. Declining health may have kept Jim from his cherished position as well.

The story of White's life sold in a booth near the park's gift shop. Jim manned the booth in his last years, signing copies of his book, *Jim White: The Discoverer of Carlsbad Caverns*, by Frank Ernest Nicholson. An old guano bucket hung behind him in a little nook of the cave.

In later years many defended Jim against those disputing his discovery of Carlsbad Caverns. Said one local old-timer, Judge Shattuck: "A lot of us saw the mouth of the cave before Jim, but none of us had the slightest desire to go in and explore it as he did."

When Jim White died in a local hospital, April 28, 1946, he only left his share from the sales of his small book. Within his lifetime the cave he loved grew from a local curiosity to a valuable part of the National Park system, visited by 2.5 million people by the time of his death.

A shy, quiet cowpoke, Jim may not have agreed with the push for his statue at the cave entrance. Instead, the park's visitor center lobby contains a plaque perhaps more to his liking:

JAMES L. WHITE
1882-1946
Beginning in 1901, Jim White made the first known extensive explorations of the Carlsbad Caverns.
He was chiefly responsible for bringing the attention of the public, scientific groups and the federal government to the importance and significance of the caverns.

If asked for a speech afterward, Jim White's characteristic response may have been, "Suits me."


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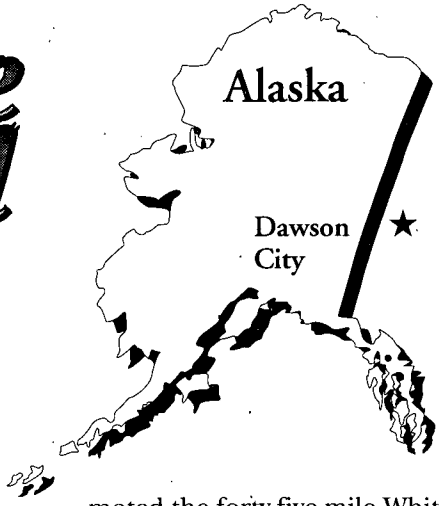
# Klondike Remembered

## By Mary Ellen Gilliland




Her Swedish-born father had scaled agonizing Chilkoot Pass to reach the Klondike goldfields. Her mother had followed when the trains began in November. In September 1900, fourteen-year-old Hulda Nelson traveled via the new White Pass & Yukon railway to join her parents in North America's wildest city.

Hulda's diary, now a treasure in my family, records her journey north and her eleven-month stay in Dawson City, Yukon Territory. Her remembrances of her father's trip north enhance the diary account.

When the *Portland* steamed into Seattle, Washington, in 1897, Hulda's father, Victor Carl Nelson, was there to see gaunt, unshaven men struggle onto the pier, hauling strangely heavy leather grips and dragging bulging packing cases. These men went straight to the bank, to empty out jelly jars of gold flakes and pokes of nuggets before wide-eyed tellers.

Victor Carl Nelson joined the first wave of what become a 100,000-strong tidal wave of gold seekers moving heavy Yukon supply outfits northward. But even the first wave of stampeding miners to conquer 4,000 miles of wilderness on the route to the goldfields arrived too late.

Hulda didn't yet know as she traveled north that her disappointed father would return to the laundry business, then watch riches be gained from straining the miners' wash water for gold. Nor did she foresee being courted by a Klondike pioneer who wooed her with dazzling gold nuggets.

Author's Collection

Hulda Nelson and her dogs, Dawson City, Yukon Territory, circa 1900.

Instead, she later told the family, she focused on the passing scene. The shiny narrow-gauge passenger cars, now two-months old in September 1900, lurched crazily around a tight curve. As the White Pass & Yukon train labored toward the summit of White Pass, she reflected on her papa's letters and newspaper accounts about this route, formerly called "the Dead Horse Trail."

Mature and fairly well-informed, Hulda knew that profiteers had promoted the forty-five-mile White Pass trail as quicker and easier than the near perpendicular Chilkoot Pass, her father's route. But the sketchy path to the White Pass summit had provided Klondikers no trail at all, only a jumble of slick boulders and forest deadfall.

Men and pack animals labored, slipped, and sweated their way upward. Men cursed, dragging their sleds, groaning under the weight of their packs until their voices raised in concert to a hellish moan. Pack animals, mired in the black ooze, suffered unspeakable injury. Broken legs, clouds of attacking mosquitoes and beatings from men driven half mad made a miserable end to the horses' lives. Countless numbers died from overwork and accident.

"Such a scene of havoc and destruction...can scarcely be imagined," one Klondiker remembered. "Thousands of pack horses lie dead along the way." The stench of rotting horse flesh caused men to wretch.

But the lure of gold pressed the stampeders on. Hulda had heard Klondike stories describing a group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of Scots in plaids and tam-o'-shanters who followed a piper across the frozen pass in winter. A man and his wife themselves moved two stern-wheel steamboats in pieces up and over the White Pass summit and down the long descent to Lake Bennett, head of navigation to reach the Yukon.

Hulda's train stopped for lunch at Bennett, now a town near the shores of the huge lake. Her father, Victor, had completed the on-foot portion of his trek to the Klondike at Lake Bennett's shores and constructed a boat to finish the journey.

Hulda's papa had emerged from the nightmare of many foot trips packing his 2,000 pounds of supplies over Chilkoot Pass to confront a huge tent colony at Bennett. Like himself, the men were trail-hardened, muscled, and paunchless, no longer *cheechako* (tenderfoot) but Yukon pioneers. He wrote letters describing their ragged beards, faces smeared with charcoal against the spring sun, and eyes red-rimmed from sun-on-snow glare.

The world's largest tent city had stripped the huge Lake Bennett valley of most of its timber for sailboat building. A mighty din had assaulted Victor Nelson's ears as thousands of hammers pounded and numberless whipsaws screeched.

Whipsawing, a tortuous chore, involved two men, one in a pit, the other above ground, team-sawing wood with a wiggly blade. The poor-quality spruce, soft and spongy, broke easily. Men who had steeled themselves to survive the passes broke under the ordeal of whipsawing.

"Brother fought brother and father fought son and the spirit of forbearance and forgiveness was not known on the trail of land and water," one eyewitness reported. Later, at Split Up City, Victor Nelson had seen men sawing fry pans and sailboats in half, rather than mend their quarrel.

When the ice finally broke on May 29, 1898, Victor Nelson had joined 7,124 boats which transformed Lake Bennett into a watery freeway. Hand-constructed kayaks, canoes, scows, side-wheelers, arks, catamarans, barges, and heavy "Yukon boats" (which plowed through the waves like a railroad freight train) all headed across Lake Bennett when the ice cleared. This sail-driven flotilla ran through a series of lakes, including wind-blasted Lake Labarge of Robert Service fame, toward the Yukon.

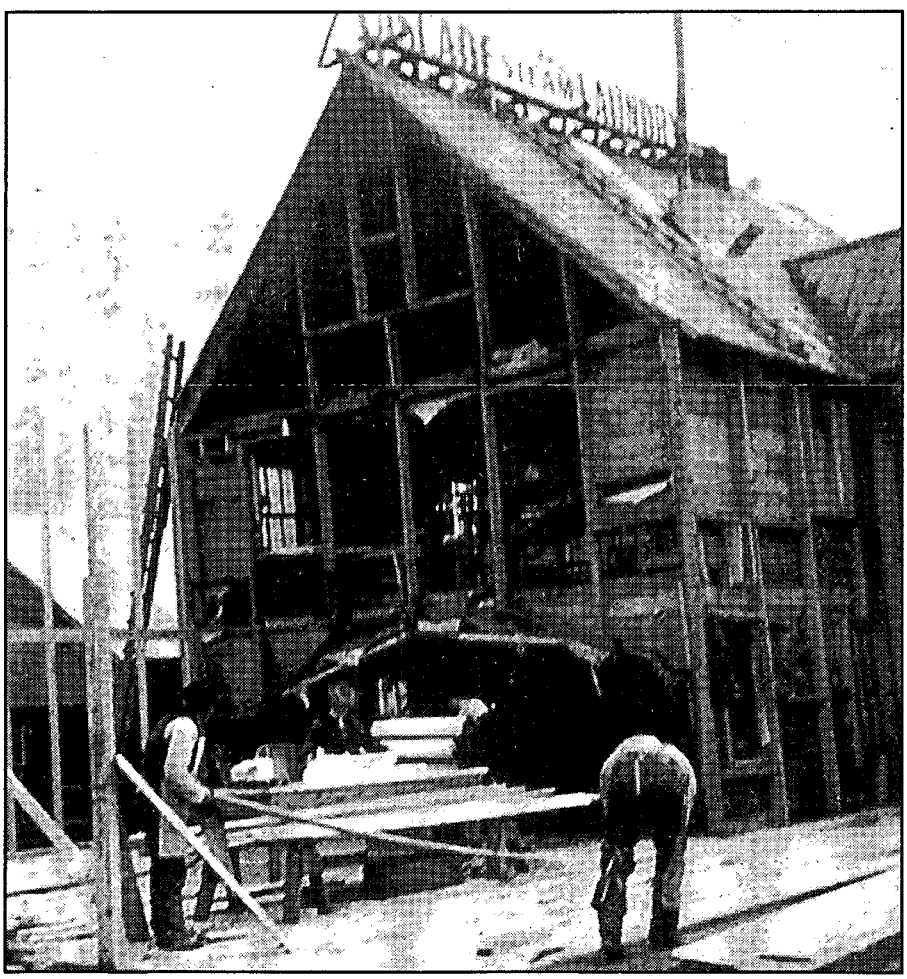
In service beginning July 1900, the railway carried Hulda well beyond Bennett to Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, where she boarded a riverboat bound for Dawson City. On Sunday, September 30, as her diary records, Hulda "left Whitehorse at 2 o'clock on steamer *Bonanza King* & crossed Lake Labarge that eve."

Hulda's boat, the *Bonanza King*, didn't make it far its first day. During the frigid September 30 night "the eccentrics froze up," according to Hulda's diary, and the wheel problem delayed them until noon October 1.

While Victor Nelson and his fellow gold rushers, traveling during spring run-off, encountered dangerous high water and rapids, Hulda's October trip north faced a less exciting hazard—sand bars.

> October 3, 1900: Passed Rink Rapids easily in the morning, landed a ways beyond and took on about 30 ton of beef. Left about noon, and stuck on a sand bar at 2 o'clock. Got swung off at midnight and tied up to the shore.

In contrast, her father's trip through Rink and other rapids danced him through a string of water hazards now enshrined in legend. Miles Canyon, a slot walled by



Author's Collection

An unidentified female presser works at Hulda Nelson's uncle's Cascade Steam Laundry in Dawson. Construction progresses while normal laundry work continues, typical of Dawson's expansion during the gold rush.



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sixty-foot basaltic rock, forced the Lewes River to shoot through like a bullet. It featured a demonic whirlpool. At Whitehorse Canyon, the river blasts through a tight 100-foot high rock gorge to create fury. This canyon had already claimed forty lives when Victor Nelson's wave of Klondikers passed through early in the gold rush.

Five Finger Rapids startled boaters when a languid section of the river ended abruptly. Boat crews, finally able to relax, read Yukon guidebooks. Suddenly, beyond a sharp right turn, they encountered five irregular blocks of reddish rock strung across the river like piers of a bridge. Two routes through the churning water offered a choice between a deadly scrape over protruding shallow rocks or a drop off into a churning eddy.

Unlike Victor Nelson's speedy trip in spring flood conditions, Hulda's boat languished five full days, stuck on various sand bars.

> October 4, 1900: Stuck on a sandbar at Hell's Gate at 11 o'clock. Got off at 4. Were coming through fine, when we swung around, hit the bank and smashed our wheel and were stuck again.

The disgruntled passengers remained stuck all night and all the next day beyond sunset. Then they had company:

> October 5, 1900: Staid there all day except moving about ten minutes toward evening. Then came the Monarch and stuck alongside of us.

The next day helpers arrived—only to be gouged for their trouble:

> October 6, 1900: There came a steam barge and they started to unload our freight, and then took it over to the opposite shore. Our boat swung loose and knocked a hole in the other boat. Monarch lay there all night.

A logjam of boats, the *Flora*, *Zealander*, and *Monarch*, attempted to aid the hapless *Bonanza King*. Finally, she sprung off:

> October 7, 1900: Lay still all day. About 8 in the evening the Canadian came from Dawson, & in trying to pass between us and the shore she raised the water so we floated off, swung around and nearly struck the Zealander.

The next day, four additional boats jammed into the insidious sandbars. The *Bonanza King* departed, only to waste another full day, October 10, "stuck in Steamboat Slough," according to Hulda. Next, the *Bonanza King* ran out of wood to fuel its progress. So the desperate passengers disembarked en masse to chop down trees. Finally, at 3:30, October 11, 1900, the *Bonanza King* landed at Dawson. Hulda's diary exclaims an echo of today's teenagers: "Landed in Dawson. *All right!*"

Hulda's first Yukon winter lived up to its frigid reputation. She learned to chop bacon with an axe and deal with salt hard as grindstone. Although thermometers were graded to register to minus sixty degrees, Yukoners wryly pointed out to Hulda that mercury freezes at minus forty degrees. Old timers taught her their cold gauge:

Coal oil freezes at minus thirty-five to minus fifty-five degrees; "pain killer" freezes at minus seventy-two degrees; Hudson's best bay rum freezes at minus eighty degrees.

The typical twelve-by-fourteen-foot, sod-roofed Yukon cabin provided minimal shelter against this cold. By spring, Hulda's family began sprucing up a new cabin, located on the hillside above Dawson:

> May 2, 1901: Stayed home all day fixing up the cabin. We got the canvas in the ceiling and the oilcloth on the floor. Mr. Shinkle came up this afternoon and brought me a dozen Kodak pictures and a sample of dust from our claims.

By then Yukon river ice had grown rotten. Everyone yearned for the ice to break up so supplies could reach Dawson. Finally, the whistle blew.

> May 15, 1901: At 3 o'clock we heard a steamer blow, and then the A.C. [Alaska Commercial Company] whistle. Everyone made for the water front. Oh! it looked fine to see it moving after being still since the 2nd of Nov.

Soon after, her father participated in a stampede, a commonplace Yukon event. (The population had plummeted in 1899 when a stampede to the gold-laced sands of Nome, Alaska, emptied 8,000 from Dawson's crowded streets.) Hulda's diary records:

> May 15, 1901: Papa is off on a stampede, to someplace about six miles above the Forks. Guess he'll be pretty tired when he comes home.

The Forks is the famous confluence of two of the world's richest creeks, Bonanza and Eldorado. During the rush, Grand Forks mushroomed to a city of 10,000.

> May 16, 1901: Papa came home about 8 o'clock this morning after walking all night. My, but he is tired. He didn't stake anything. Didn't think the ground worth it. He lay down till noon, then had to go to work.

Victor Nelson had given up trying to mine full time and then worked in his brother-in-law's laundry where they discovered the profit-enhancing technique of straining the gold from wash water. After one of Dawson's frequent fires, residents would pan the ashes for gold. Saloon fires produced lucrative pay dirt, or "pay ash."

This was possible because Klondikers were careless with gold. Hulda heard stories of Big Alex McDonald, "King of the Klondike," who once invited a lady reporter to help herself to a bowl heaped with forty-five pounds of gold nuggets.


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"Take as many as you please," he encouraged. "There are lots more." Gold dust spilled on dance hall floors while chocolate remained locked in safes.

Some gold flowed Hulda's way. The young Swedish boys who worked on the creeks enjoyed ice creams and dances with Hulda and rewarded her smiles with nuggets.

Another entry mentions the second Klondike valuable, chocolate:

> May 25, 1901: Ray Larson came up and brought a large box of Ramsey's chocolate bonbons. He is working in the mess house on Alex McDonald's claim on Cheechako Hill.
>
> June 5, 1901: Stopped in the laundry and saw Gus Johnson's nuggets. I guess it was about three or four hundred dollars worth, and there were some beauties among them. Saw those Shinkle had picked out for a bracelet. Wish I'd get them.

Apparently, Hulda's girlish dreams came true:

> July 5, 1901: I got my bracelet from Shinkle yesterday. It is fine. There are 15 nuggets in it and they all came out of Gus' claim.

On July 12, Hulda records a gift of nuggets as blandly as she records the weather:

"Gus gave Mama and I each a lovely nugget for hair pins. It's been very warm lately."

Social life took on a merry pace for this young girl in the Klondike. The young people climbed Midnight Dome to view the midnight sun on the Mid-summer's night. Parties and fun abounded. Hulda commented,

> My but I had a good time at Nordall's this evening. There were several of the boys down from the creeks, some that I had never met before. Ola said Laura sent me her love, and a kiss, but he wouldn't give it to me. I had a couple of dances with Emil and he took me home.

Mr. Shinkle always came to Hulda's hillside cabin bearing exotic treats (coconut, oranges, chocolates, almonds, ice cream), which he could easily afford. Though most Klondikers arrived too late for good claims, Shinkle was in the Yukon, possibly at Fortymile, before the gold rush. His claim, registered with the mining recorder on July 24, 1897, just after news broke in Seattle, bordered the most famous gold-bearing ground in history. His diggings lay just seven claim lengths (each claim measured 250 feet) from the discovery claim on Eldorado, on the world's richest placer creek. Louis Emkins, a lean-limbed prospector from Illinois, staked the claim next to Shinkle's and sold it within the year for $100,000, a fortune in 1897.

By 1901, Dawson's fervor had calmed. Hulda lived a demure life in Dawson City, going to Swedish socials, playing the piano, attending the Methodist-Episcopal church. Three-piece suits and derby hats had by then replaced men's faded mackinaws, patched trousers and high top trail boots. Respectable women outnumbered the lumpy Belgian prostitutes of Paradise Alley and the gold-digging dance hall girls of Front Street. Ornate architectural facades covered hastily-erected green log buildings which shrank to ugliness their first season. Dogs dragging heavy sleds across frozen mud, businesses operating in tents, and haphazard piles of firewood heaped up in the roadway gave way to telephone service, running water, steam heat, and motion pictures.

In August 1901, as Yukon winter approached, Hulda Nelson began the long journey back to Seattle.

Author's Collection

The Yukon riverboat in the background was typical of the variety that brought Hulda Nelson, foreground, and thousands of other gold-hungry settlers to the Klondike.

> August 3, 1901: Aboard Clifford Sifton. Left this evening at 9 p.m. Staid home all day getting my things ready. Mrs. Nordall, Alida, Annie, Shinkle and several others were down to the boat. We had a fine farewell. A band on board went with us as far as Klondike City and a big crowd with them. Mama, Papa, Shinkle & Annie staid on and walked back.

After riverboat and rail journeys, the steamship ride to Seattle proved rough and Hulda bemoaned her seasickness.

Finally she wrote:

> August 11, 1901: It has been awful rough. I feel all shook up. Expect to reach home tomorrow. Won't that be fine?

The Nelson family eventually moved back to Seattle where they operated a boarding house and delicatessen.

Hulda married, had two children, and moved to Colorado, seeking relief from tuberculosis. Hulda Nelson died in Colorado in 1925.



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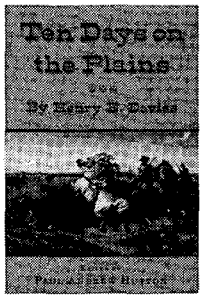


**235—TEN DAYS ON THE PLAINS.** *By Henry E. Davies; ed. by Paul Andrew Hutton.* Originally published in a limited edition in 1871, this well-illustrated and produced book is an account by Civil War General Henry Davies of a spectacular hunting expedition on the high western plains. Davies features a young scout, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, as the central figure in the story of the expedition. 194p. Southern Methodist University Press.
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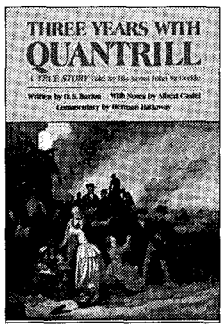


**681—THREE YEARS WITH QUANTRILL: A TRUE STORY TOLD BY HIS SCOUT JOHN McCORKLE.** *By O.S. Barton.* This famous memoir by McCorkle is the best published account by a scout who "rode with Quantrill." McCorkle displayed an unflinching violent nature while he participated in raids and engagements, including the massacre at Lawrence, Kansas. First published in 1914, this new edition contains a critical introduction and notes. 240p. University of Oklahoma Press.
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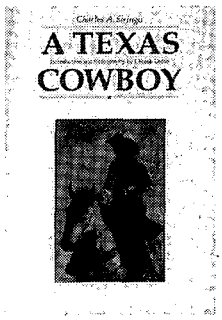
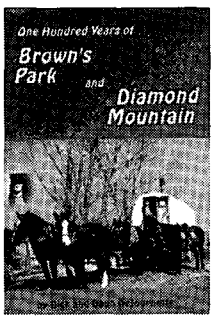
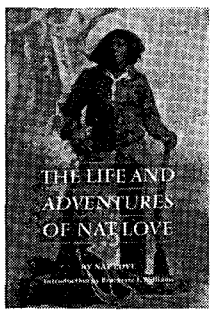


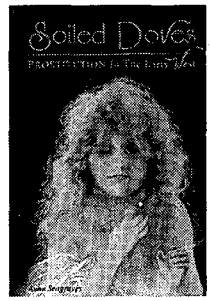

**551—A TEXAS COWBOY; OR FIFTEEN YEARS ON THE HURRICANE DECK OF A SPANISH PONY.** *By Charles A. Siringo; intro. & biblio. by J. Frank Dobie.* Siringo punched cattle for Shanghai Pierce, rode the Chisholm Trail, knew Tascosa, once roped a buffalo, and joined in the chase for Billy the Kid. His chronicle of his years as a itchy-footed boy, cowhand, range detective, and adventurer was originally published in 1885. This edition reprints the 1886 Addenda. 216p. University of Nebraska Press.
**Paper, $10.00**



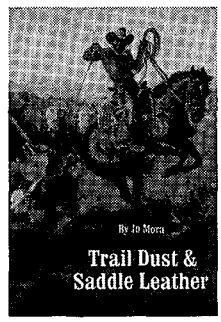

**665—ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF BROWN'S PARK AND DIAMOND MOUNTAIN.** *By Dick and Daun DeJournette.* The DeJournette family has resided in Brown's Park, home of the infamous Brown's Hole, since 1895, the year that Dick's father, Ford, arrived as a young cowboy. Ford became acquainetd with and befriended many of the area's most well-known characters, such as Harry Tracy, Butch Cassidy, and David Lant. This book is an account of the DeJournette family's life as well as a revealing history of the famous region in which they settled and lived. 476p. DeJournette Enterprises.
**Paper, $34.95**




**689—THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF NAT LOVE.** *By Nat Love.* Although thousands of black cowboys pushed cattle north following the Civil War, only Nat Love wrote about his experiences. Born a slave in Tennessee, Love migrated to Kansas after the war to begin a career riding the range and fighting Indians, outlaws, and the elements. His vivid autobiography takes the reader through the close of the frontier. 180p. University of Nebraska Press.
*NEW SELECTION!* **Paper, $9.00**




**532—SOILED DOVES: PROSTITUTION IN THE EARLY WEST.** *By Anne Seagraves. Soiled Doves* tells of the grey world of prostitution and the women who participated in the oldest profession. Colorful, if not socially acceptable, these women of easy virtue were a definite part of the early West. Illustrated with many rare photos, this book provides a touching insight into the lives of the ladies of the night. 173p. Wesanne Publications.
**Paper, $11.95**




**567—TRAIL DUST AND SADDLE LEATHER.** *By Jo Mora.* Born in Uruguay in 1876, Mora worked with and observed cowboys and vaqueros from Canada to South America for more than half a century. In *Trail Dust and Saddle Leather,* he presents in authentic lingo and detailed drawings the real-life cowboy's daily chores and chow, clothing and equipment, and ways with critters and steeds. First published in 1946. "Superbly illustrated...exceptionally fine book"—*Library Journal.* 246p. University of Nebraska Press.
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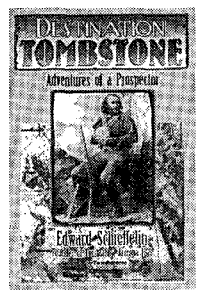


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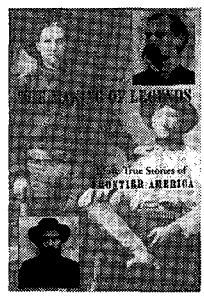

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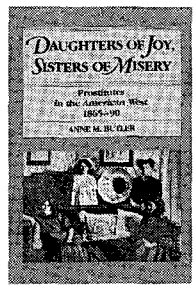


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# REVIEWS

## THE FOURTH GUARDSMAN

*The Fourth Guardsman: James Franklin "Bud" Ledbetter.* By Glenn Shirley. (Eakin Press, PO Box 90159, Austin, TX 78709. 202 pages, notes, index, bibliography, 33 photographs and maps. $22.95 Cloth.)

Indian Territory historian Glenn Shirley has authored over two dozen books dealing with outlaws and lawmen, including full-length biographies of Heck Thomas and Bill Tilghman, two of the famed "Three Guardsmen." Although Chris Madsen, the third of the trio, may be the subject of a future Shirley book, he now presents a biography of another lawman, James Franklin "Bud" Ledbetter, who he feels deserves to be known as the "Fourth Guardsman," ranking with Tilghman, Thomas, and Madsen.

It would be hard to argue with this thesis, as Ledbetter certainly earned his fame in law and order history by surviving numerous gunbattles and making hundreds of arrests. Surprisingly, in spite of his dangerous career, he was never wounded. He killed or seriously wounded at least twenty-one bad men. He did not always resort to gunplay; he once prevented a mob from taking his prisoner with sheer determination. Ledbetter dealt with all types of lawbreakers, from the whiskey peddler to the arsonist and rapist and murderer. The Bucks and Jenningses were only two of the better known gangs Ledbetter fought.

Shirley has mastered the ability to uncover new material from century old records and present it in a fresh manner. He provides details on Ledbetter's exploits but does not lose focus on the main topics. Apparently Ledbetter had intended to write some form of autobiography, but the idea came too late and it was never completed. During his life he avoided talking of his exploits, letting the sheer number of destroyed whisky stills and captured fugitives speak for him. Consequently many exciting details of his career as a lawman are lost for history. Further, his wife and children apparently did not make any record of Ledbetter's exploits. Shirley has accomplished a major coup in gathering new material in this single volume.

Although the narrative reads so well and each chapter focuses on a major event, we are somewhat frustrated with the several maps included. Providing maps is worthwhile, but only if they are clear to the reader. The 1892 map of Arkansas is reduced to two pages, consequently too small except for the most determined reader with a strong magnifying glass. The detailed map of the Cherokee and Creek nations is also so reduced it is nearly illegible. Many readers will be disappointed in the few photographs of the characters involved, although those included are reproduced well and are of significant size.

The word "problems" is perhaps too strong a word for these illustration concerns. The book remains a wonderful read and is a significant contribution to the western buff's library. We can only hope Shirley continues to research, write, and publish.—*Chuck Parsons, Yorktown, Texas.*

### The Gass Journals

*The Journals of Patrick Gass: Member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.* Edited and annotated by Carol Lynn MacGregor. (Mountain Press, Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806. 447pp. $20.00 Paper.)

Unless one is a specialist in early western exploration or a dyed-in-the-wool Lewis and Clark devotee the modern armchair traveler will not have met one of the most colorful characters of that fabled expedition—Patrick Gass.

This situation has now been rectified by Mountain Press' publication


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of Patrick Gass' long out of print journal concerning the travails and triumphs of the first Coast-to-Coast Walkathon.

In addition to Thomas Jefferson's insatiable curiosity concerning the land beyond the vide Missouri, the Western Territories were also a matter of dispute until 1846 when America and England established the northern boundary of the United States at the 49th Parallel. Yet during this time there were still several major players in the international game of laying claim to that country, including Spain and Russia.

And it was precisely the need to clear up such a murky situation that the Jefferson-sponsored expedition of fifty one men set out from St. Louis on May 14, 1804. There were no gentlemen's sons on this journey for the two captains wanted only "good hunters, stout and healthy men, accustomed to the woods and capable of bearing bodily fatigue in a pretty considerable degree."

Among those chosen was the Scotch-Irish Patrick Gass, a slender, whipcord strong young man with dark hair and penetrating black eyes.

Born at Falling Springs, Pennsylvania on June 12, 1771 Gass worked with pack trains, flat-boated to New Orleans, and eventually joined the army in 1799. While with the army at Kaskaskia, Illinois, he signed on with the western expedition in 1804. One of its most versatile members, he served as boat-builder, carpenter, boatswain, hunter, and experienced horseman. But his most enduring accomplishment would be his journal.

There were seven journals kept on the trip, but Gass' writings are the most straightforward. He allows the reader to feel the hardship of the day-to-day quest for food, the influence of weather upon the crew, and the pestiferous torments of mosquitoes, fleas, prickly pears, and even grizzly bears. Readers trudge with him over the rich Missouri River bottoms, cross the mountainous wastelands, and at last stand upon the rocky, fog-laced coastline staring out over the limitless, blue Pacific.

Gass was the first member of the Corps of Discovery to bring forth his journal in 1807. Published in London in 1808, it appeared in France in 1810 and in Germany in 1814, right in the midst of the Napoleonic Wars but holding its own with such best sellers as Washington Irving's *History of New York* and Sir Walter Scott's *Waverly*.

The second half of the Mountain Press edition continues the long life of Patrick Gass (he lived ninety-nine years) through the notations in in his Personal Ledger Account.

Covering two periods, 1826-1837 and 1847-1848, it offers proof that Gass was not just a "tough, untutored, tobacco-chewing sergeant whose journal had been sometimes thought to have been influenced by his first editor."

Gass' purchases range from jews-harps and almanacs to palm-hats and it give a day-to-day look at the old sergeant's lifestyle just as his 300-page-account, more than any other, immortalizes the nation's greatest period of exploration.—*Bill Garwood, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.*

**A Scot in Montana**

*Scottish Highlanders, Indian Peoples.* By James Hunter. (Montana Historical Society Press, 225 North Roberts St., Helena, MT 59620. 224pages. $18.95 Paper.)

This is a rather specialized book that will probably appeal only to a limited readership. It is, in part, a general review of the Pacific Northwest's fur trade and its interaction with the Nez Perce tribe, but it is much more an account of the Scots who were trading post factors and trapping brigade leaders, especially the members of the McDonald clan (Archibald, Ranald, Angus, Duncan) who intermarried with the Nez Perces. It is a rare look at the "bloods" or half-bloods in important positions at Fort Hall, Fort Colville, and so forth. For once, the much abused terms, prejudice and bigotry, do apply. Once that civilization arrived on the fron-


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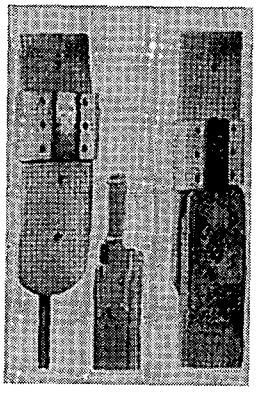

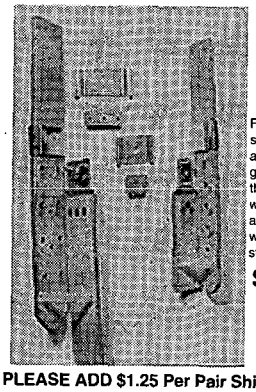

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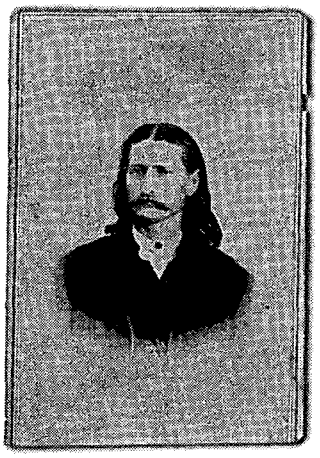

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tier in the shape of white women and so-called "proper" families, men of merit like the pioneering McDonalds were disparaged as squawmen and half-breeds.

The author is a Scot, not an American, and his subtitle is "Thirty [!] Generations of a Montana Family," so be warned. After beginning with a look at the sad and unnecessary Nez Perce War of 1877, he flashes back to Scotland, itself, for thirty pages or so of Highlands history and genealogy that will not be every reader's cup of tea. After that, however, he settles down to a Canada-Montana-Idaho narrative with a light, personal, and readable style. He is almost conversational, in fact, when he is visiting historic Montana sites, such as the Bitteroot Valley.—*Richard Dillon, Mill Valley, California.*

**Arizona Gunfight**

*Gunfight in Apache County, 1887—The Shootout Between Sheriff C.P. Owens and the Blevins Brothers in Holbrook, Arizona. As Described by Will Barnes.* Edited by Neil B. Carmony. (Trail to Yesterday Books, PO Box 35905, Tucson, AZ 85740. 44 pages. Seven photos, two maps. $7.95 Paper.)

Although it was just as deadly, the gunfight which played out on the streets of Holbrook, Arizona, between Sheriff Owens and the Blevins brothers has never attracted as much attention as the O.K. Corral fight. Certainly Owens was as brave as the Earps, but certain elements were lacking in this 1887 fight which left three dead and one wounded. The sheriff remained unscathed.

Will Barnes, an eyewitness, prepared a manuscript describing the gunfight which has gone unpublished for sixty-plus years. Hence, this work will be new to western buffs.

Both editor Neil Carmony and publisher Bob Pugh should be commended for such a fine contribution.—*Chuck Parsons, Yorktown, Texas.*



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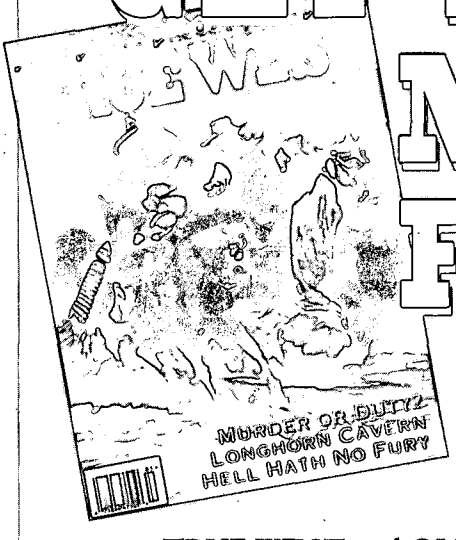


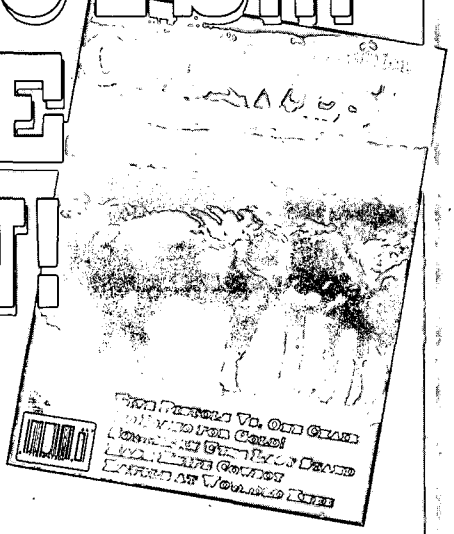

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**The Norias Battle**

Long time reader ("for more years than I care to admit") Sandy McCutchan, Coahoma, Texas, inquires about an event called the Norias Battle which occurred in South Texas on August 9, 1915. From her grandmother, Sandy learned that her great uncle, Luther Perryman, was somehow involved in this fight. Ms. McCutchan wants to know more about this battle.

The Norias was part of the huge King Ranch, headquartered on the railroad line about seventy miles north of Brownsville. At dusk on August 8, 1915, a band of Mexicans approached and attacked the headquarters building. Earlier that afternoon Texas Adjutant General Henry Hutchins and Texas Ranger Captains Henry Ransom, J.M. Fox and George J. Head, along with ten other Rangers and eight United States cavalrymen stationed at Harlingen, arrived on a special train from Brownsville. They had answered an urgent call from a ranch foreman requesting assistance due to "suspicious horsemen" having been seen in the El Sauz division of the ranch.

General Hutchins left the soldiers at Norias then hurried on to the El Sauz division. About sundown the regular train reached Norias with three custom inspectors, D.P. Gay, Joe Taylor, and Marcus Hinds, and Cameron County Deputy Sheriff Gordon Hill. These four, plus the eight soldiers left by General Hutchins, and a handful of ranch people, including several women, constituted the "force" at the King Ranch headquarters when the fighting erupted.

The raiders numbered somewhere between fifty and seventy men. Under a red banner, some 250 yards from the ranch building, the raiders began firing. The exchange of shots lasted for about two hours. During that time the raiders divided their force and effectively fired on the Norias defenders from three sides.

As dark set in, a charge was made by the ranch defenders, and inspector Joe Taylor killed one of the opposing leaders. The raiders withdrew, carrying their wounded and leaving behind ten dead. One of the men left behind made a confession before he died. He said that the attackers had planned to raid and burn the headquarters building, then derail and loot the night train.

This raid provoked great outrage in the Rio Grande Valley and the army increased its presence significantly. The Norias raiding party was tracked to the Rio Grande but not captured. Those who were identified were later run down and killed, and no doubt many innocent Mexicans were also killed in the aftermath.

The Norias Ranch raid was only one of many incidents taking place during the "bandit wars" between 1912 and 1915 along the Texas-Mexican border. There were twenty-six recorded clashes with raiding parties, and two trains were derailed. The helpless passengers were robbed and shot in the wreckage. Thousands of National Guardsmen were called up and stationed in camps along the Rio Grande.

On March 9, 1916, Pancho Villa's raiders made an onslaught on Columbus, New Mexico, killing ten American civilians and eight soldiers. In response, President Wilson ordered General John J. Pershing into Mexico to punish the raiders and bring back Pancho Villa, dead or alive. Pershing failed in this mission, but his ten-month excursion discouraged further raids from south of the border.

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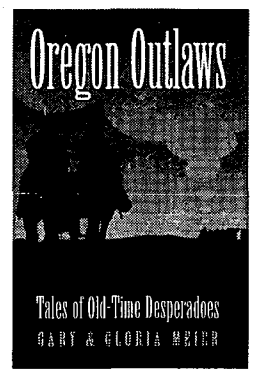


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always inspired questions and debate, especially after his success during the Civil War. Custer's actions during the Indian War period opened the door to controversy. Charles R. Luton, Danville, Illinois, has been reading *True West* for a long time and inquires about the promotions of Custer. "I don't understand why Custer was never rated above Lt. Col. His wife was the daughter of a U.S. Senator and she tried twice to twist arms for his General rating, but it never happened."

Custer had been appointed a first lieutenant on July 17, 1862, with brevet rank of captain. On July 3, 1863, he was promoted to brevet major in the regular army. In June 1864, he was promoted to full captain, and then to brevet lieutenant colonel. On October 21, 1864, in a grand ceremony in Washington before Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, Custer learned he had been promoted to major general, the youngest in the army. With the end of the war he was reverted back to captain.

To deal with the mounting Indian "problem," Custer was appointed lieutenant colonel of the Seventh Cavalry on July 28, 1866. There is no telling how Custer may have fared, but in 1867 he was court-martialed, convicted, and suspended from rank and command for one year due to certain indiscretions such as cruel treatment of deserters and over-marching his troops. He was also guilty of being AWOL, and perhaps worst of all in March 1876, in testimony before a congressional committee probing frauds in the Indian Department, he gave testimony unfavorable to W. W. Belknap, former secretary of war. President Grant was so irritated that he gave Custer's command to Alfred Terry. Public pressure forced Grant to reinstate Custer with his command.

### Human Branding

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once branded men guilty of desertion. "I understand this was done with the letter 'D' and was branded on the deserter's upper arm. Can you tell me more and when it was last done and to whom?"

Information on the branding of animals is abundant, it is more difficult to find information on the branding of humans.

We know that slaves in the American South were sometimes branded as a means of punishment. Branding was used by some countries as a form of torture. It was also used as a means of marking criminals. One source told of the "branding of a telltale mark" upon the forehead of a pickpocket which alerted potential victims to take special precaution. Certainly the practice of branding in the Americas died out around the Civil War, probably with the abolition of slavery.

**Lincoln County Warriors**

Ronald Nance, Cicero, Illinois, continues with his efforts to determine the birth and death dates of famous westerners. His latest inquiry deals with several men who figured in the Lincoln County War. Naturally, the following is somewhat incomplete.

**Charlie Bowdre**: born in Mississippi about 1848; killed December 23, 1880, near Taiban, New Mexico.

**Henry Brown**: born in Rolla, Missouri, in the fall of 1857; shot to death while attempting to escape after a failed Medicine Lodge, Kansas, bank robbery, April 30, 1884.

**Richard Brewer**: born in St. Albans, Vermont, in 1852; killed by Andrew "Buckshot" Roberts April 4, 1878, at Blazer's Mill, Mescalero, New Mexico.

**Jose Chavez y Chavez [Chaves y Chaves]**: born in New Mexico around 1851; died in Milagro, New Mexico, on July 17, 1923.

**Frank Coe**: born in West Virginia, on October 1, 1851; died of pneumonia September 16, 1931, at Glencoe, New Mexico.

**George Coe**: born in Brighton, Iowa, on December 13, 1856; died November 12, 1941, at Glencoe, New Mexico.

**Frank MacNab**: when and where MacNab was born is unknown, but possibly in Scotland; killed during an ambush at Fritz Spring, New Mexico, April 29, 1878.

**John Middleton**: born in Tennessee 1864 or 1865; died November 19, 1882, of smallpox in San Lorenzo, New Mexico.

**Tom O'Folliard**: probably born in Texas around 1855; killed by Sheriff Pat Garrett's posse December 19, 1880, at Fort Sumner, New Mexico.

**Yginio Salazar**: born in New Mexico, February 14, 1863: died January 7, 1936, in Lincoln, New Mexico.

**Josiah G. Scurlock:** born in Talaposa, Alabama, January 11, 1849; died July 25, 1929, in Eastland, Texas.

**Frederick T. Waite**: born September 23, 1853; died September 24, 1895, in Pauls Valley, Indian Territory.

If you have a question, send it to Chuck Parsons, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. Please keep questions brief. Sign your full name and address, including zip code. Names will be published if question is used. Space limitations may not permit us to use all questions. Due to the volume of mail, we cannot forward correspondence to people whose questions appear in "Answer Man."


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# FIRST WHITE WOMAN IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## By Jacque D. Huntemann

John Jay's Treaty of 1784 permitted United States fur trading in the Pacific Northwest to compete with the English interests. Fort Astoria was established in Oregon in 1805. By 1812 the Americans and the British were again engaged in war. The U.S. was unable to defend its interest across the continent and in 1813 the Astorians were forced to sell out to the British owned North West Company. The name Fort Astor was changed to Fort George.

In April of 1814, Fort George was in turmoil for lack of leadership. They were looking forward to the arrival of their new governor, Donald McTavish, aboard the ship, *Isaac Todd,* that had wintered in San Francisco. McTavish, a partner in the North West Company, had already retired and was independently wealthy; however, he had volunteered to go back into service and take charge of Fort George.

Jane Barnes was described as a flaxen haired, blue-eyed daughter of Scotland. Jane dreamed dreams that no respectable young lady of 1814 England dare dream. If Miss Barnes had been born a male she could have been a sailor, and could have easily seen the world and traveled to the mysterious Pacific Coast of the North American continent.

Jane Barnes was not a male but a fetching female barmaid in a Portsmouth hotel where gentlemen adventurers to the new world came to talk and relax in a bit of British luxury.

A few days before he was to leave for the Pacific Coast of North America, Donald McTavish dropped by the Portsmouth Inn. No doubt a conversation arose between the elderly gentleman and the attractive barmaid. Maybe because of the difference in their ages she felt free to confide in him her dreams.

McTavish found Jane a lively young woman, fond of literary quotations. Even though she could not read or write, her association with the gentlemen who frequented her establishment must have allowed her to hear much of the classics. Because young women of her social standing had no access to education, this also may have been one of Jane's dreams.

McTavish found this young woman to be an interesting companion. He invited her to travel with him on the *Isaac Todd* to the Pacific Northwest.

So it was to the delight of the all male population at Fort George their governor did not arrive alone. When the *Isaac Todd* crossed the bar and anchored in Baker's Bay on April 22, 1814, Jane Barnes was aboard, the first white woman to see the shores of Oregon and the Columbia River. Many of the men at Fort George had not seen a woman of their own race for years. This was certainly the first white woman the Indians had ever seen. They must have wondered how the white men reproduced themselves.

Jane must have had a grand shopping spree before leaving England. McTavish had supplied her with an expensive wardrobe. With all the new admirers she made the most of it. Each day she sported a new outfit and she knew how to wear her clothing to best show off her winsome figure. She also had arrived with many headdresses. One day she covered her head in a hat of feathers and flowers. This one delighted the natives. Another day she would braid her hair and leave it uncovered.

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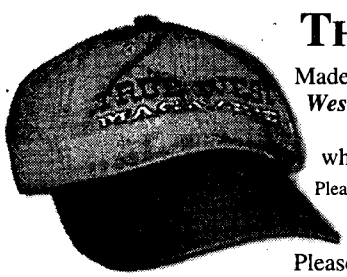

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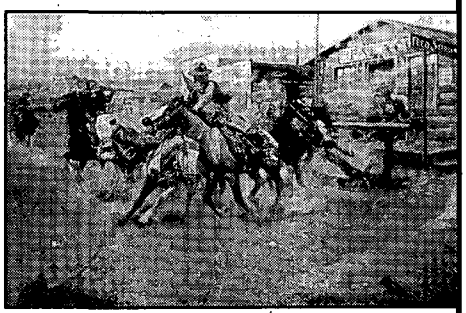

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The young Indian women gazed with wonder and envy upon her, and the older women were indulged by being allowed to touch the finery.

Miss Jane Barnes, lately a Portsmouth barmaid, was living her dreams. Among others, Cassakas, the proud young son of Chief Comcomly, the principal chief of the Chinooks, fell head or heels in love with the lovely blond. Even though he already had four wives, Cassakas proposed marriage.

He promised her she would be the chief among his wives. She would never need to carry wood or water. She would not need to dig for roots or hunt for provisions. She could wear her own clothes and smoke as many pipes of tobacco a day as she thought was right. She would be permitted to sit every day in her own clothes taking her ease. There would always be fat salmon and anchovies and elk to eat. He would send her relatives a dowry of one hundred sea otters. He came dressed in the height of Chinook, his body covered with whale oil. He had decorated his face in red paint. He was the chief's son and he was offering her his best. Any of the young native women would have swooned at such an offer.

When Jane callously rejected him, his native masculine pride was hurt and he swore never to come to Fort George again, much to the joy of the men at garrison. As he left, some of the men heard him plotting with the Indian men to kidnap her and take her away from the fort. From then on Jane was never allowed outside the fort alone.

Much to their pleasure, Jane was always accompanied by some of the men from the fort. It had been her custom to walk on the beach every evening after dinner while the gentlemen were enjoying their cigars. This was a practice she had to curtail.

That the men did not consider her a lady was demonstrated one day aboard the *Isaac Todd.* Alexander Henry was present and recorded it in his journal. He, along with Donald McTavish and the ship's physician and Miss Jane



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Barnes, were eating a lunch of biscuits and cheese served with port wine. According to Henry the two other men began "a vile discourse" concerning the subject of the native women and venereal disease.

It seems gentlemen of the eighteenth century could philander to their hearts' content and remain gentlemen, but a woman was no longer a lady who gave in to their amorous advances. Alexander Henry must have been a bit ahead of his times. McTavish had his own way of demonstrating affection for the young woman. One of his first acts as governor was to rename the sloop called the *Dolly*; he rechristened it the *Jane*, probably not only to please Jane but to establish his company's commercial victory over the American John Jacob Astor. It had probably been named for Astor's sister-in-law or his daughter.

Donald McTavish found out by accident that Jane was not the educated young woman she had portrayed herself to be. It happened one day when a group of them were in conversation discussing the virtues or the lack of virtue in native women. Jane, who loved quotations, spoke out. She ask her protector, McTavish, if he agreed with Shakespeare that "every woman is at heart a rake."

He corrected her by saying, no, that it was "[Alexander] Pope."

Jane shouted back that no, it was "rake." There was only one woman Pope. To show him the argument was over she took up an old newspaper and began to read. When McTavish looked at her, he discovered she had the paper upside-down. This seemed to mark the end of McTavish's infatuation with Jane Barnes. Ross Cox reported he met him as he came out the door and noticed he seemed annoyed. Cox inquired of him what was troubling him. McTavish replied, "What do you think. I have just had a conversation with that fine-looking damsel there, who looks down with contempt on our women, and may I be damned if that bitch understands B from buffalo!"

On May 6 he made arrangements with Alexander Henry to take over his duties as protector of Jane. Henry claimed he took over the duties as an act of necessity rather than affection.

Henry promised to make Jane's situation as comfortable as possible, not as a lover but through humanity. He reported she had put her affections elsewhere but never enlightened anyone on where they were placed.

On May 8 the long boat brought Jane and her baggage to the fort and she moved into Henry's room. She seemed to prefer Henry's protection to the relationship with McTavish. She made herself at home in Henry's room and when the governor came to shore there was no place for him to sleep. He found a table in the Indian room to stretch out on until he finally found another room.

McTavish didn't take long to get over the loss of Jane. He found a Chinook woman who had been married to Benjamin Clapp, a former Astorian clerk. He dressed her in fine black broadcloth, selling for twenty-three shillings sterling a yard. When the Chinook woman began to parade around the fort in her finery, Jane threw a tantrum. This did not enhance her position with the fickle McTavish.

The Chinook woman did not have long to enjoy her place as the woman of the fort's governor. The *Isaac Todd* was moored opposite the fort above Village Point. McTavish entreated Captain Smith to bring the ship across to the fort. The captain refused because of the low water levels in the channel; however, there were three fathoms and a half at high tide.

Smith's refusal ended in tragedy. On May 22, Donald McTavish and Alexander Henry were both drowned when their open boat tipped over in the middle of the Columbia River. Six voyageurs were transporting them in a stiff gale. A heavy wave struck the boat, causing it to instantly fill with water and sink. All were killed with the exception of one man, an American carpenter named Joseph Little. He was


## In the Summer issue of *Old West*:

***Lon Oden: The Rhymin' Ranger.*** **By Karen Holliday Tanner and John D. Tanner, Jr.** Nowhere was it written that a Texas Ranger need turn a verse like a poet, yet Alonzo "Lon" Van Oden does just that, recording his feelings with uncommon insight, intellect, and talent.

***Riding The Shawnee Trail.*** **By Arthur Shoemaker.** Fourteen-year-old Jim Rainwater accompanies Colonel George Miller, of 101 Ranch fame, on a rigorous trail drive from Missouri to Texas.

***Christina Geisel: A Story of Kidnapping and Tragic Deaths.*** **By Vern Wimmer.** Rogue River Indians go on a rampage, destroying Oregon farms and lives. After the smoke has cleared, Christina Geisel and her daughter Anne are nowhere to be found.

***The Incredible Frank Dowler.*** **By Bill Kelly.** The citizens of Palmdale, California, are shocked and horrified when a heavily-armed lawman proclaims himself judge, jury, and executioner.

***Big House on the Prairie.*** **By Ken Weinman.** A treasure hunter finds a rich vein of history on an abandoned New Mexico pioneer homestead.

***H.A. Dinsmore: From Arkansas to Korea.*** **By Charlotte Anne Smith.** The first minster to Korea, rural Arkansas lawyer, and banjo picker Hugh Dinsmore records a culture quite different than his own.

Look for the Summer issue of *Old West* on the newsstand April 14.




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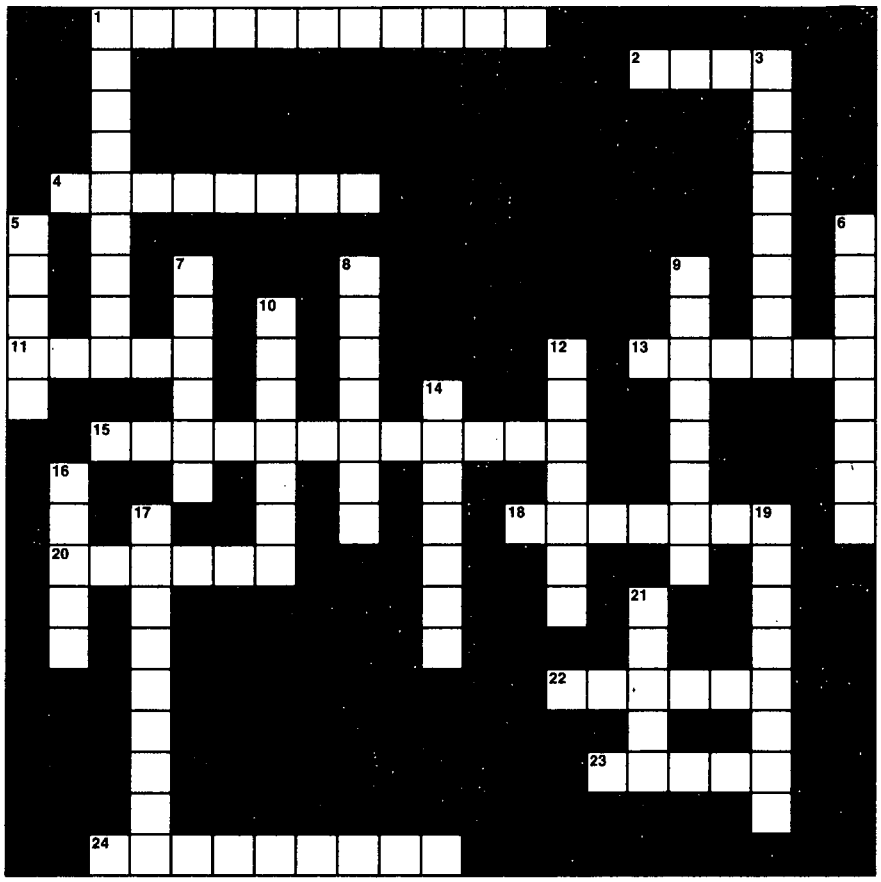

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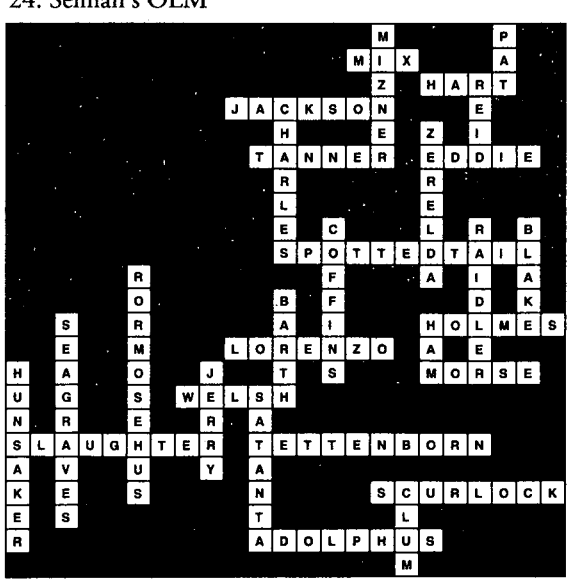

**Solution in next month's True West.**

**Solution to last month's puzzle.**

successful in finding a snag in the water and holding on to it for nearly two hours. Two Chinooks came to his rescue and hauled the exhausted man to shore.

The bodies of Governor McTavish and Alexander Henry and four of the voyageurs were found the next day. They were given their last resting place behind the northeastern bastion of Fort George.

With both her protectors dead and buried, Jane Barnes was left in a rather precarious position for a young woman of the early nineteenth century. However, the indomitable Miss Barnes managed her own way. No one liked Captain Smith of the *Isaac Todd* and Jane was no exception. She instead sought the company of a Captain Robson of the schooner *Columbia*. The two ships sailed at the same time but Miss Barnes left on the *Columbia*.

A nice ending to this story would be the one told by Ross Cox. When the *Columbia* docked at Canton, China, Miss Barnes found herself admired by the inhabitants of the city. She met a wealthy Englishman connected to the East Indian Company, and he offered her a splendid future.

However, the version by John Fuller is more likely. Jane arrived in London on the *Columbia*, and Captain Robson presented a bill to Alexander McKenzie & Company, Montreal, for her passage. He sent along copies of letters she had in her possession and an agreement by the representative of the North West Company. He also questioned them concerning an annuity that was promised to Jane.

Wherever Jane Barnes spent the rest of her life, she did not seem to be one that would accept any less than the best life could offer. She does go down in history as the first white woman to set foot in the Pacific Northwest and quite possibly the first woman to travel around the world.



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## INDEX OF ADVERTISERS


Back to Earth ....52
Barbed Wire Press/ Glenn Shirley books ....Cover 4
Book Mart .... 49-50
Blevins Manufacturing....53
Collector's Armoury....6
Commons Crafts....52
Dixie Gun Works....9
*Gunsmoke In Lincoln County*....58
Johns Hopkins University Press ....8
Kingfisher Books....52
Outlaws and Lawmen Books ....51
Panhandle Development....7
Pleasant Valley Saddle Shop....9
R & A Hobbies ....52
Retail Profit Program....8
Slocum Books....53
Steve Eagles....52
Tamarack Books....56
*Tombstone Tumbleweed*....Cover 3
*True West* Ball Caps....59
*True West Legends* Back Issues ....54
*True West* T-Shirts ....Cover 2
*True West* subscriptions ....55
University of Colorado Press ....5
University of Nebraska Press....1
Western art prints....60
Women in the West Books....57


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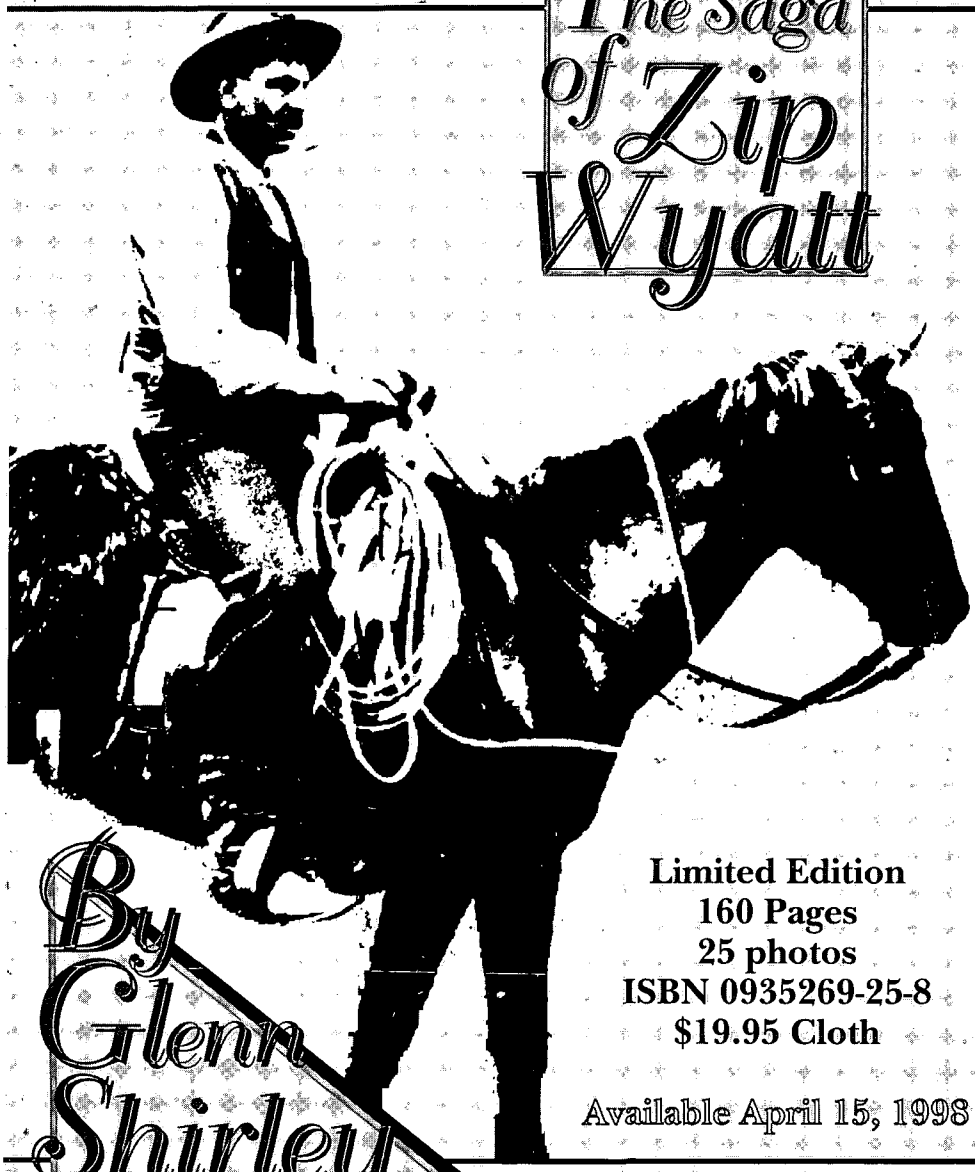

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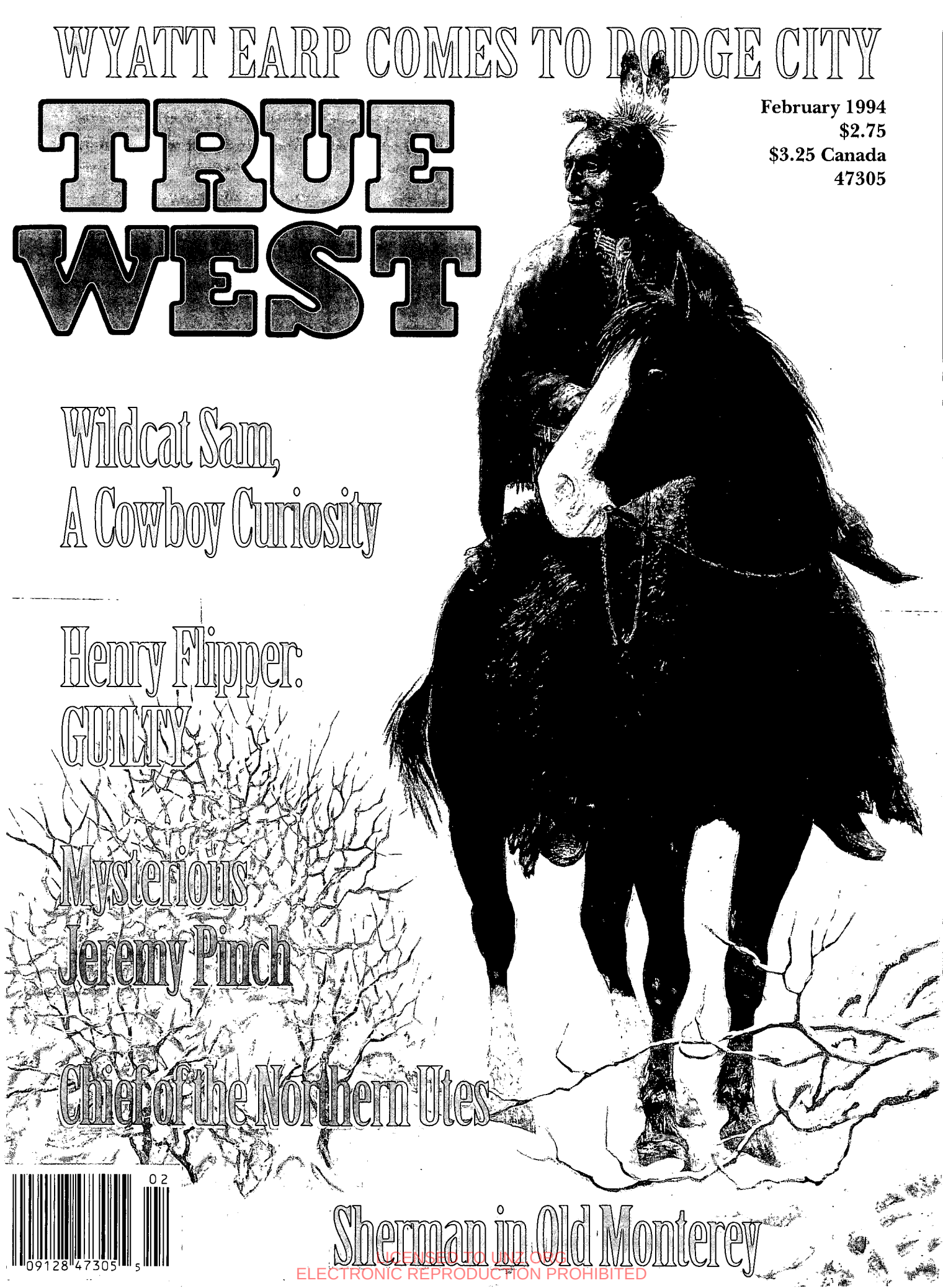

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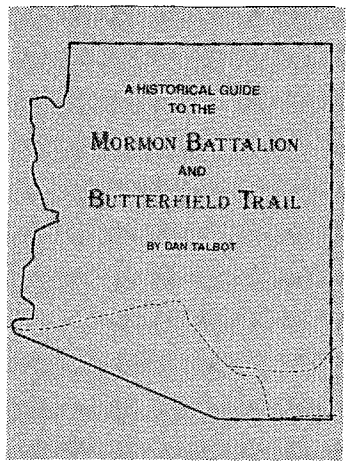


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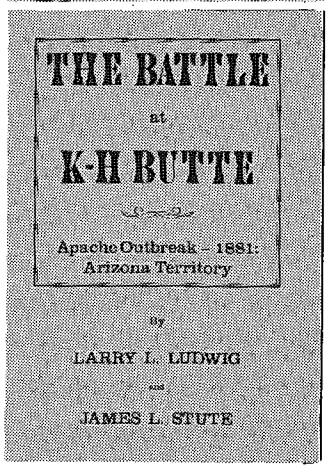


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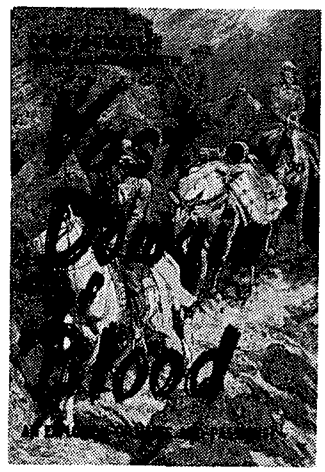

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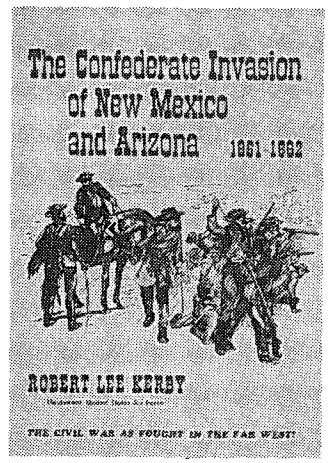


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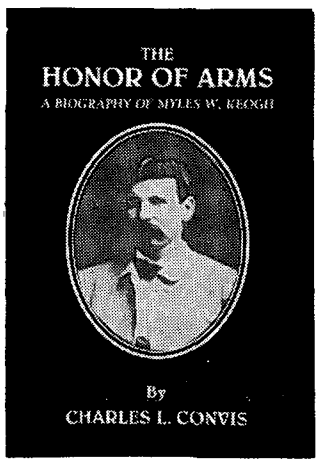


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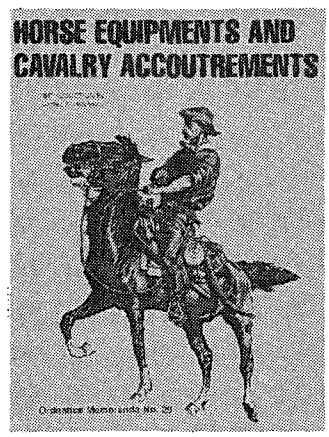


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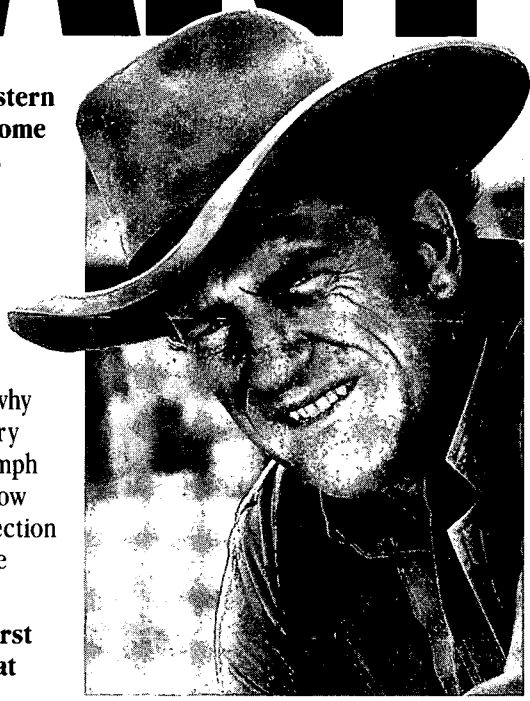

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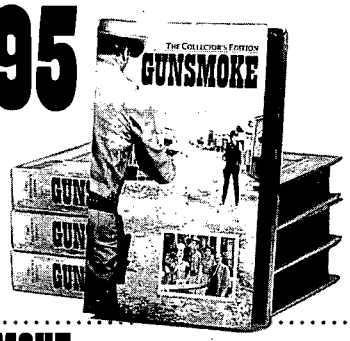


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# TRUE WEST

February 1994
Vol. 41, No. 2
Whole No. 310

Page 14

## FEATURES

14 **Wyatt Earp: Legendary American. Part 7, Dodge City Hokey Pokey.** *By Glenn G. Boyer.* The Kansas cowtown may not have been the worst place on earth, but it was plenty challenging for a frontier lawman.

20 **Lieutenant Henry Flipper: Guilty.** *By Charles M. Robinson, III.* The historical record forces a writer's change of mind.

26 **Chief Colorow, Ute Defender.** *By Ruth Willett Lanza.* This Northern Ute leader continued to resist the white man throughout his long life.

37 **Who Was Jeremy Pinch?** *By David Braly.* After nearly two centuries, the identity of a mysterious letter writer continues to intrigue historians.

42 **Thomas Starr King's California.** *By Richard H. Peterson.* Now a forgotten hero, he was a man of many roles in post-Gold Rush California.

46 **Wildcat Sam, Cowboy Curiosity.** *By Diana Allen Kouris.* Brown's Park had attracted a lot of characters through the years, but Wildcat Sam beat all.

50 **Sherman and Old Monterey.** *By Robin Pennock.* The young lieutenant must have wondered what misfortunate brought him to the little post.

Page 20

## DEPARTMENTS

5 **From the Editor**

6 **Truly Western**

8 **Western Roundup**

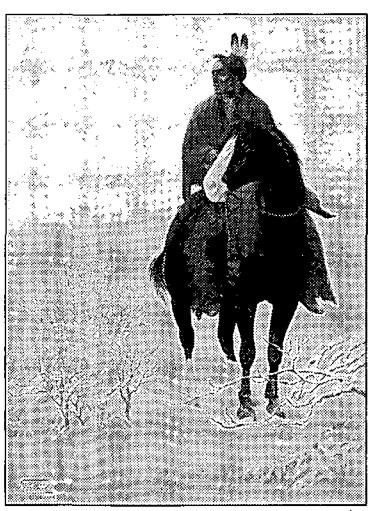
12 **Western Logbook**

56 **Answer Man**

59 **Reviews**

63 **Wild Old Days**

Page 26



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*Romans 15:21,* by Chuck DeHaan.

Page 46

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# TRUE WEST

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# FROM THE EDITOR

Howdy, folks!

*True Westerners* who keep an eye peeled for such things will notice some changes in our regular columns this issue. Bill O'Neal's "Great Western Gunfights" has been retired after a long and happy run. From your many favorable comments about "Gunfights" over the years, I know you'll miss it. Bill and I also hated to see the column go, but the fact is he had covered just about all the most famous or otherwise significant gunfights.

A while back, we saw that in order to continue the column we would have to contemplate changing its name to "Not-so-great Western Gunfights," followed by "Mediocre Western Gunfights," followed by "Absolutely Rotten Western Gunfights." From there it likely would have degenerated to "Great Western Fistfights" to "Great Western Arm Wrestling Matches" to "Great Western Exchanges of Insults."

In the meantime, Bill has been writing another column for *True West*'s companion publication, *Old West*. It had begun as "100 Years Ago in the West." Then as the Old West slipped farther and farther into the past, it became "125 Years Ago in the West," and occasionally Bill still threw in centennial anniversaries, sesquicentennial anniversaries, and even a bicentennial anniversary or two. Since *Old West* is a quarterly, Bill often found himself wrestling with a lot of important anniversaries over a three-month period and having to pass over some for the sake of space.

Finally Bill suggested the solution. Why not officially expand "125 Years Ago in the West" to include the other major anniversaries—100, 150, etc.—move it to *True West*, and concoct a new column for *Old West*?

As often happens, the solution created new problems. First, what would we title the newly expanded column in *True West* and where would we position it in the magazine. Second, what would we replace it with in *Old West*? For titles, "Big Dates in the Old West" was some too frivolous and "Major Anniversaries of Significant and/or Otherwise Interesting Events in the History of the Trans-Mississippi West" was just a mite ponderous and overblown. About five minutes before deadline, we came up with "Western Logbook."

Finally, where would we put it? Looking at the whole magazine, it seemed logical to have an overview of history—"Western Logbook"—at the front, followed by our feature articles, and to bring each issue to an end with a bang with something more narrowly focused, something that rolls up its sleeves and gets down to specific and, often, more obscure facts. Chuck Parsons' "Answer Man" column, long a favorite among *True West* readers, filled the bill perfectly.

This month you'll find "Western Logbook" beginning on page twelve. Livening up the back pages of this issue, "Answer Man" starts on page fifty-six. Left-handed or otherwise backward individuals such as I, who read magazines from the last page to the first, will delight in not having to thumb through an entire issue before reading "Answer Man." (If you're looking for "Trails Grown Dim," don't despair. We will continue to run it when we have a sufficient number and variety of letters to fill a column or two. We just came up short this month.)

If you're an *Old West* reader, I hope you'll enjoy seeing a new, slightly improved "Western Logbook" in *True West*. If you're not an *Old West* reader (and that's a shame!), I know you'll be happy to count "Western Logbook" among your newfound friends.

Oh, about that new column that Bill has in the chute for *Old West*. If I told, it would ruin the surprise.

John Joerschke



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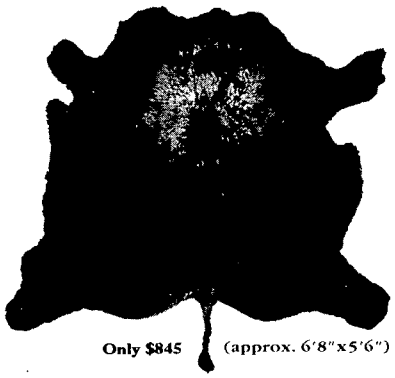

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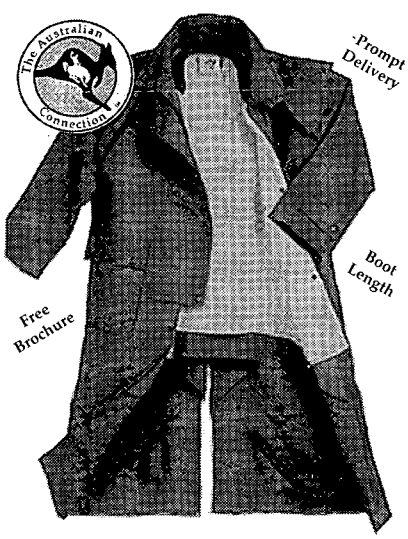


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# Smear Tactics

Congratulations on the fortieth anniversary issue of a long-time excellent publication (*True West*, October 1993). May it last another forty years and more! But even more important, in my opinion, is the fact that you have changed the paper from newsprint to a coated stock with ink that doesn't smear in my hands. I think it is great that you have gone to the higher grade of paper, so now you can't call it a "rag." Once again, congratulations to you on a great magazine.—*John Craft, Rochester, New York.*

**Editor's Note:** I'm glad you like the new paper, pard. It's enabled us to get better reproduction of those faded and fuzzy old photos, and it allows us to make our layouts more interesting and appealing. But I reckon I'll still think of *True West* as the same likeable, unpretentious little rag that it's always been.

### In Our Own Back Yard

It seems to me that being located in Oklahoma you would have more stories about the famous characters right in your own backyard, particularly the lawmen. I'm not referring to Bud Ledbetter, Heck Thomas, Chris Madsen, Paden Tolbert, or Bill Tilghman—all great lawmen whose exploits are well known, as are those of the infamous outlaws Bill Doolin, the Daltons, Henry Starr, Ned Christie, Bitter Creek Newcombe, and Dick West, just to name a few.

I'm referring to the black and mixed-blood lawmen such as Sam Sixkiller, Grant Johnson, Rufus Cannon, Ike Rogers, Zeke Proctor, and Bass Reeves, who over a thirty-two-year career in law enforcement shot down fourteen men in the line of duty, which puts him pretty high in the "gunfighter" category, approaching the tallies of Wes Hardin and Jim "Killer" Miller. Reeves also once arrested his own son, who subsequently went to prison.

I would also imagine the feud between Zeke Procter and Sut Beck that culminated in a shootout at the Going Snake district court would be pretty good material. Nine men died that day, making the O.K. Corral shootout look like a lazy afternoon in Arizona. One measure of the level of violence in Indian Territory can be found in a remark by the famous Texas man-killer, Bill Longley. Following a few warm encounters of his own there, Longley is reported to have said, "I've had enough of the nations."—*Ben Lawson, Pinole, California.*

**Editor's Note:** Thank you kindly for the suggestions. We've covered Sam Sixkiller and Bass Reeves, but I'll be on the lookout for stories on some of the others.

### Hey, What About Frank?

I enjoyed the "Answer Man" item on Jesse James and his family (*True West*, October 1993). How about a write-up on Frank James? I'd like to know his full name, his wife's name, and his children's names. I would especially like to know more about his life after he was pardoned for his crimes.—*Mrs. E.J. Griffiths, Oskaloosa, Alabama.*

**Editor's Note:** Alexander Franklin James (January 10, 1843–February 18, 1915) was born in Clay County, Missouri. He and Annie Ralston were married June 7,



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1874, and had one child, Robert Franklin James (February 6, 1878–November 18, 1959). Annie died July 6, 1944. "The Cole Younger and Frank James Wild West Show," by E. Lisle Reedstrom (*True West*, October 1992), is an interesting account of Frank's later life. A good source on James family genealogy is Phillip W. Steele's *Jesse and Frank James: The Family History* (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican, 1987).

**Another Coward**

I just received my November issue of *True West*. When I read your excellent editorial on the O.K. Corral shootout, what I saw was not you, but me. I, too, would have been a coward. The whole issue is superb and has the type of stories that interest me most. I am especially enjoying Glenn G. Boyer's series, "Wyatt Earp: Legendary American," as Earp, Tombstone, and Arizona in general are among my favorite topics.—*Dave Rowland, East Sussex, England.*

**Little Beavers**

I recently enjoyed reading Sharon E. Martin's article about Fred Harmon, "Fine Place to Visit? You Betchum!" in a back issue (*True West*, September 1992).

I grew up in Wynnewood, Oklahoma, and at eighteen years of age, I joined the navy in 1942, after Pearl Harbor. I served on a destroyer, fighting the Germans for seven months and then going on to Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands. I then went all the way to Japan.

I was on the Destroyer USS Charles Ausborne DD 570, the flagship of the Little Beaver Destroyer Squadron 23. We fought day and night down there, and they called us the Little Beavers, so we painted Little Beaver on our bridge.

When Fred Harmon heard that Little Beaver was fighting the war, it made him so proud that he got in touch with our captain, Arleigh Burke, and invited all of us to a thirty-day vacation at his ranch when we came home.

Last September Fred Harmon, III, invited us to his place for a reunion. We all went to Pagosa Springs, and we made him an honorary member of the Little Beaver Destroyer Squadron, which is still in operation. Its home port is San Diego, and it was the first to take over an Iraqi ship in Desert Storm.—*Ernest H. "Bill" White, Elmore City, Oklahoma.*

Your letters and comments are welcome. Please keep letters to 300 words or less. All letters received by Western Publications will be considered for publication unless otherwise stipulated in the letter. Space does not permit us to print all letters we receive. Be sure to include full name, address, and zip code. Photos are welcome. Address all letters to Western Publications, PO Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076. Due to the volume of mail, we cannot forward correspondence to people whose letters appear in "Truly Western."


# Whiskey Peddler

## Johnny Healy, North Frontier Trader

*William R. Hunt*

Though volumes of raw material about Johnny Healy's years in Montana, Idaho, and Alberta in the mid-nineteenth century have accumulated in historical societies and library archives, his story has never been fully told until now. As a miner, sheriff, whiskey peddler, and buffalo robe trader, Johnny was among those who displaced the Indians and destroyed their way of life. Nevertheless, this "Merchant Prince" helped usher a new civilization into the West, before the challenge of new adventures drew him to Alaska in 1885, where the enterprising trader supplied the needs of Yukon-bound miners. Quick to win and quick to lose, Healy eventually ended up financially destitute but among the richest of all men in frontier experiences.

His story is told here in rich, vivid detail by historian Bill Hunt, who spent years researching and writing about this consummate frontiersman so that we might understand something of his life and times.

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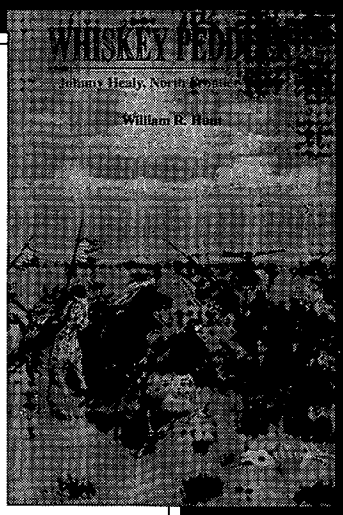


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# Glimpse Gilmore's Ghosts

By Merritt des Voigne

People passing by the town of Gilmore in Lemhi County, Idaho, often mistake it for a defunct western movie set spread over a wide alluvial plain. However, Gilmore is a bona fide ghost town, its weathered buildings and rusting relics the only echo of its prosperity in the early-twentieth century as a gold-, silver-, and lead-mining town.

Gilmore is about fifty-five miles southeast of Salmon on Idaho State Road 28, and about a mile west of that little-used highway. The remains of the place blend in so well with the dry country flora and its background of hills, draws, and evergreens in the Lemhi Range that travelers might well pass it by if not for an old historical marker beside the roadway.

Curious visitors who venture up the narrow dirt road to check out the scattered, deteriorating buildings will get a glimpse of life in an old mining town. There is nothing to interrupt an interloper's wanderings or thoughts; he can construct his own vision of events in the long forgotten place. Small depressions in the terrain might hold the charred remains of a building, a collection of gnarled bedsprings, or a battered wood range with its rusted stovepipe leading nowhere.

The remaining structures are a scattered collection of log and mortar buildings, many topped with cedar shingles or remnants of tarpaper roofs. Standing in front of Gilmore's largest building, a dual-purpose general store and post office, it is easy to imagine the bustle that filled the town when ore wagons rumbled out of the mines, over the dusty, frozen, or muddy streets of town, and headed downhill to begin a long trip to a railhead miles away. One can also sense the excitement as the Gilmore and Pittsburgh Railroad, running south from Salmon, arrived at the lonely town in 1907. It eventually hauled lead and silver ore to smelters in Montana.

Life in Gilmore was still rough,

(*Continued on page 10*)

Author's Photo

Abandoned buildings in Gilmore offer a glimpse of life in an early Idaho mining town.



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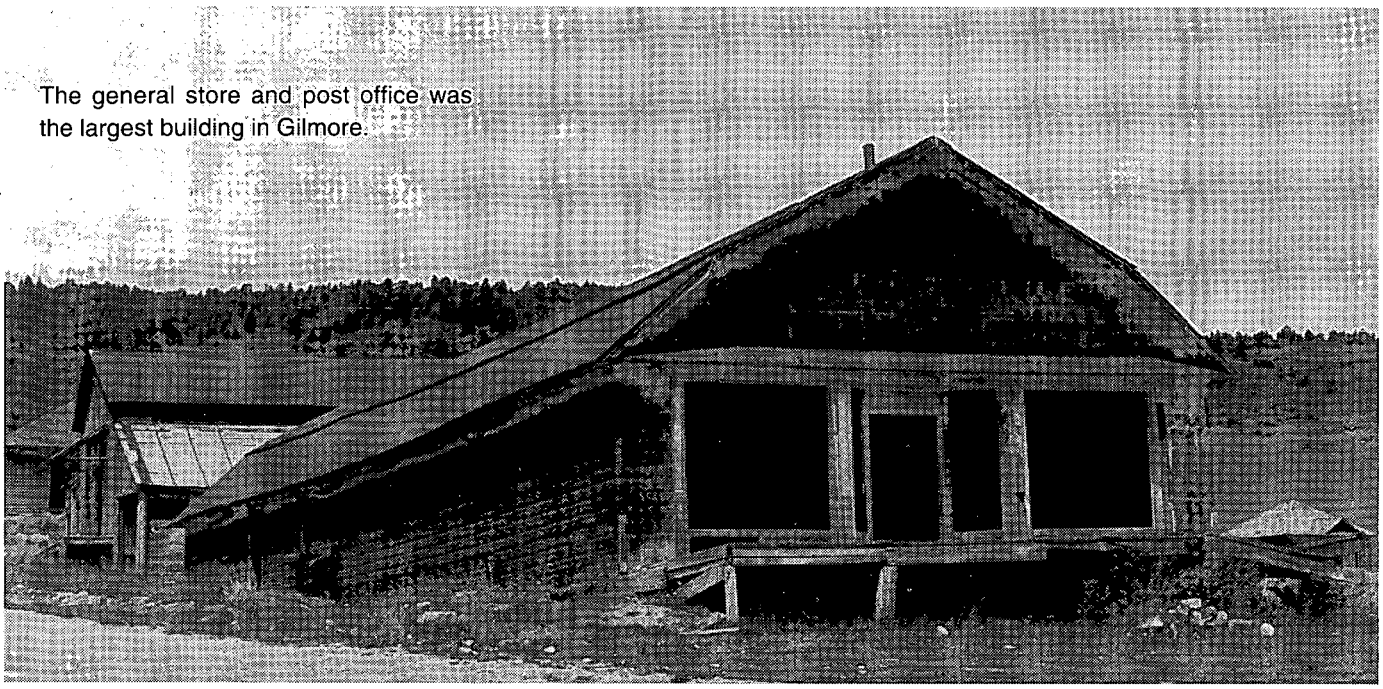
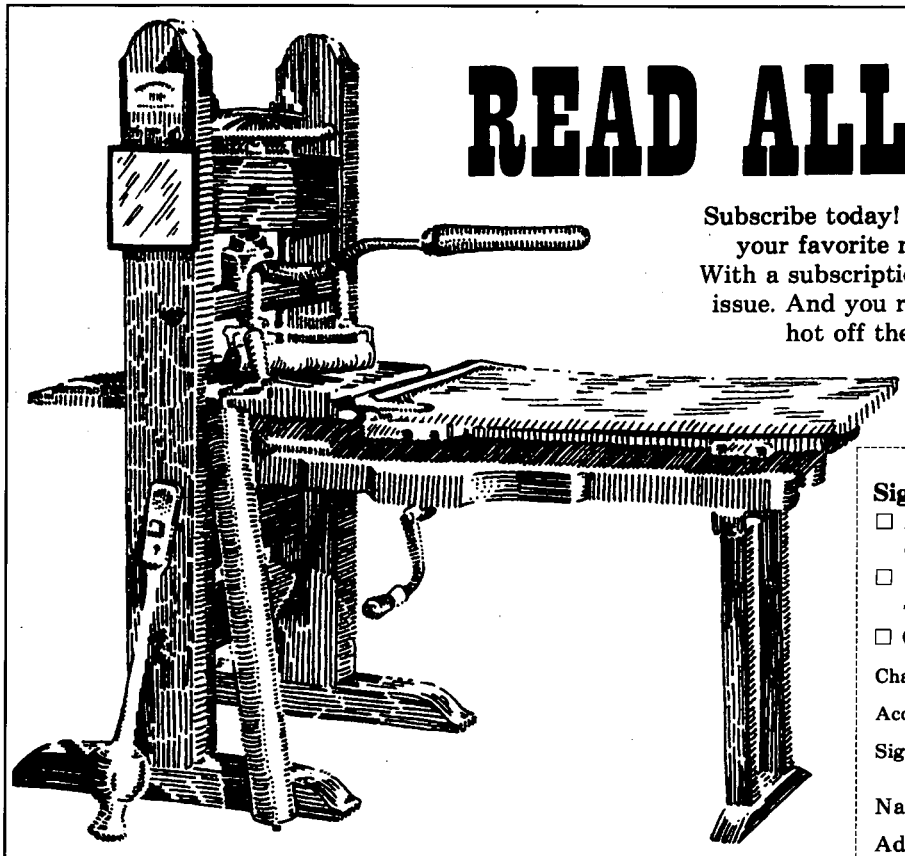


The general store and post office was the largest building in Gilmore.

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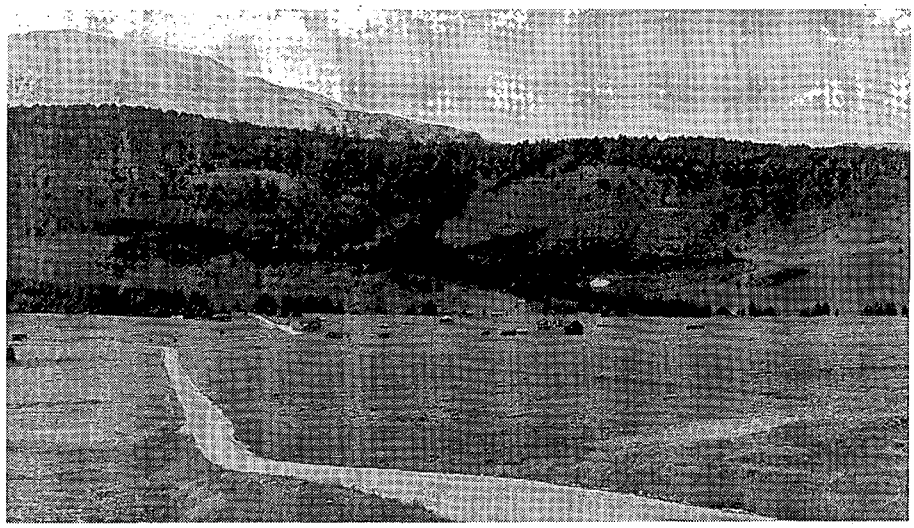

Author's Photo

From a distance Gilmore, Idaho, could be mistaken for an abandoned 1920s movie set.

(*Gilmore, continued from page 8*)

regardless of the prosperity of the times. One story tells of a freezing cold winter when snow and sub-zero temperatures all but shut down the town, leaving miners with little to do but hibernate inside their tiny but easy-to-heat rooms.

The heated dwellings also attracted the area's rodents, but the spirit of American entrepreneurship lived in Gilmore. An unnamed man solved the rodent problem and made a few bucks when he imported 150 cats and sold them for five dollars each.

Like so many other Western mining towns, Gilmore's heyday faded. The mines closed in 1929, the result of both a power plant explosion and the stock market crash. Before they closed, however, Gilmore mines had produced ore worth more than $11 million.

The ghost town has no tourist gimmicks, no gatekeeper selling admission tickets, no information booth, no fast food outlets, no rest stop facilities, no nearby campgrounds, and no service stations or garages. Gilmore is certainly isolated, but perhaps its remote locale has helped save it from the effects of tourism—at least so far.

# *Cowboy Gear Exhibit Opens*

The George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum in Springfield, Massachusetts, will present *Cowboys, Vaqueros and Buckaroos: Cowboy Art from the Deihl Collection* February 13 through August 28. The exhibit includes 122 pieces of authentic cowboy artifacts and memorabilia from the holdings of collector Douglas Deihl.

On display will be a wide assortment of boots, hats, sombreros, chaps, spurs, gunleather, and saddles. The exhibition includes a pair of Navaho spurs and a cartridge belt which William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody once owned. Many of the objects are elaborately decorated and made by some of the leading manufacturers of western gear. Also included are several colorful beaded items, a variety of Mexican objects, nineteenth-century photographs, Wild West show posters, and miscellaneous cowboy equipment.

Western Roundup is a report on places to go and things to see associated with the history of the Old West. Submissions are welcome. Information on scheduled events should be submitted at least four months prior to the event. Items on historic places are also welcome. Send information including photos to: Western Roundup, Western Publications, P.O. Box 2107, Stillwater, OK 74076.



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# Historic firearms at BBHC

Three classic Marlin rifles, including two which sharpshooter Annie Oakley owned and the first lever-action repeating rifle that John Marlin ever produced, are currently on loan to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming. The firearms, soon to be on display in the center's Buffalo Bill Museum and Cody Firearms Museum, join a collection of more than 135 Marlin models at the museum. Frank Kenna, Jr., president of Marlin Firearms in North Haven, Connecticut, presented the rifles to the center in September.

Howard Madaus, curator of the Cody Firearms Museum, said the facility also received the loan of copies of Marlin design and production records. The museum already housed a Winchester collection and records, and uses such information for on-site research and inquiries from firearms aficionados.

John Mahlon Marlin opened his New Haven gun shop in 1870, intent on making better products than his competitors. In an early catalog featuring the Model 1897 he wrote, "It costs more to make and will cost you more than other .22 rifles—but it is the best in the world if you are willing to pay for it." The firearms industry and collectors alike consider the model a classic among .22 rifles.

One of Oakley's rifles now on loan to the museum is a gold-plated and engraved Model 1897 which Marlin Firearms gave her in 1906. The other is a Model 1893 which the company presented her in 1917.

The third weapon on loan is Marlin's Model 1881, serial number one, which the gunmaker designed to incorporate a number of inventors' patents including those of H.F. Wheeler, Andrew Burgess, and E.A.F. Toepperwein. The model was Marlin's first production repeating rifle and was an instant success, particularly in the West.

In 1991, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center opened the new Cody Firearms Museum which houses the largest collection of American firearms in the world. The center complex also includes the Buffalo Bill Museum, the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, and the Plains Indian Museum. For more information about the exhibits, contact the historical center at PO Box 1000, Cody, Wyoming 82414. The phone number is (307) 587-4771.


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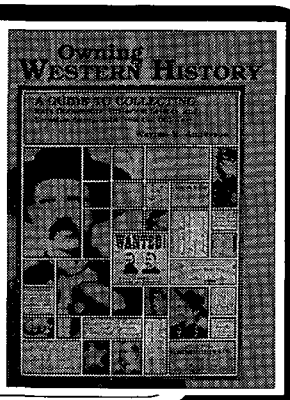


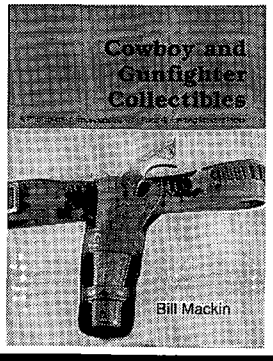


## Cowboy and Gunfighter Collectibles

*Bill Mackin • Photos by Nancy S. Bostain*

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# Plows, Patrols, & Winter Snows

By Bill O'Neal

**125 Years Ago**

**February 2, 1869; Washington, DC.** James Oliver received a patent for a plow that could break the sod of the Great Plains without clogging. When pioneer farmers reached the Plains before the Civil War, the iron plows that had served so well in the East proved woefully inadequate in the West. Buffalo grass had a tangled root system three or more inches deep, but in the 1860s a series of steel plows was invented that allowed farmers to proceed with the cultivation of the Great Plains.

**February 5, 1869; Aravaipa Mountains, Arizona.** Captain Reuben Frank Bernard commanded a seventy-five-man patrol which traveled 250 miles probing the Aravaipa Mountains for Apaches. On February 5 he led a charge through the snow against a rancheria. Bernard's men killed eight Apaches and took six women and children prisoner.

Bernard spent his first twenty-one years on his parents' Tennessee farm. He then worked as a blacksmith for two years in Knoxville before enlisting in the First Dragoons in 1855. Stationed in the Southwest, the burly Bernard won quick promotions to corporal, sergeant, and first sergeant. On eighteen occasions he led a fifteen-man mail party on a lonely, 200-mile mail route, and from 1856 through 1861 he was in at least eight combat actions.

During the Civil War, Bernard became a brevet colonel; after Appomattox he reverted to the regular rank of captain. Again stationed in the Southwest, he served as captain of Company G of the First Cavalry for fourteen years. He trained his men more diligently than was customary on the frontier, and led them into action more than twenty times.

National Archives

Reuben Frank Bernard enlisted as a blacksmith in the First Dragoons in 1855 and was eventually breveted a brigadier general. He fought in Western Indian campaigns through four decades, from the 1850s through the 1880s.

**150 years ago**

**February 1844; Sacramento Valley, California.** Explorer John C. Frémont departed on his second western expedition in May 1843. The guide for the forty-man party was Tom Fitzpatrick, although Kit Carson joined the group when it reached the Arkansas River. Frémont and his company explored the Great Salt Lake, journeyed up the Oregon Trail to Marcus Whitman's mission on the Columbia River, then turned south to see if the Sierra Nevada was passable in winter. Struggling through deep snows and over steep trails, the party abandoned a cannon and ignored the warnings of area Indians that such a crossing would prove disastrous. On February 6, 1844, Frémont, Carson, and Fitzpatrick climbed a peak and sighted the Sacramento Valley.

For the next two weeks Frémont led his men through snowdrifts so deep that they often had to beat a road into the snow with "mauls" (hand-fashioned mallets). On February 23, while scrambling over icy rocks, Frémont slipped and tumbled into a freezing stream. Carson leaped in and pulled Frémont out, then built a fire to dry their clothing.

By that time the men were reduced to eating mule and horse meat, and on February 25 Frémont



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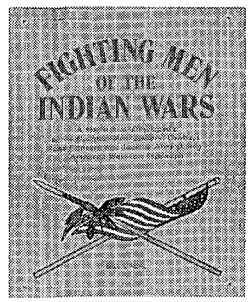
decided to press ahead with Carson and six other men toward Sutter's Fort, where he could procure fresh food and horses for his party. The advance group took the best remaining mounts and pushed south, but the end of the month found both parties still struggling through a frozen wilderness.

**February 29, 1844; Mingolsheim, Germany.** Al Sieber was born in Germany. Al's father, a farmer, died when the boy was only one year old, but his indomitable mother managed to immigrate with her large brood to the United States in 1849. The Siebers settled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, for the next seven years before Al moved with his mother and an older sister to the logging settlement of Minneapolis, Minnesota Territory. At the age of eighteen in 1862, Al joined the First Minnesota Volunteers, and he was badly wounded in combat at Gettysburg.

After the war, Sieber went West, and in 1871 he became an army scout in Arizona. A natural marksman and an expert outdoorsman, Sieber would become legendary as chief of scouts under the gifted General George Crook.

### 200 Years Ago

**February 21, 1794; Jalapa, Mexico.** Antonio López de Santa Anna was born. "The glorious career of arms," captivated him as a youth, and he enlisted at age fourteen in the royal army of New Spain. His boyhood hero was Bonaparte, and he later styled himself the Napoleon of the West. He possessed a commanding figure and intermittently controlled Mexico for more than three decades, although proving faithless to every cause except himself. Santa Anna was a persistent opponent of pioneer Texans, most notably during the Texas Revolution in 1836 and the Mexican War, 1846–1848.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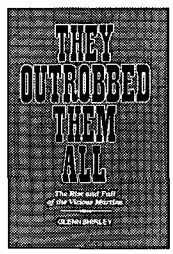


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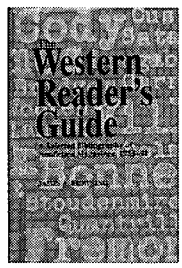


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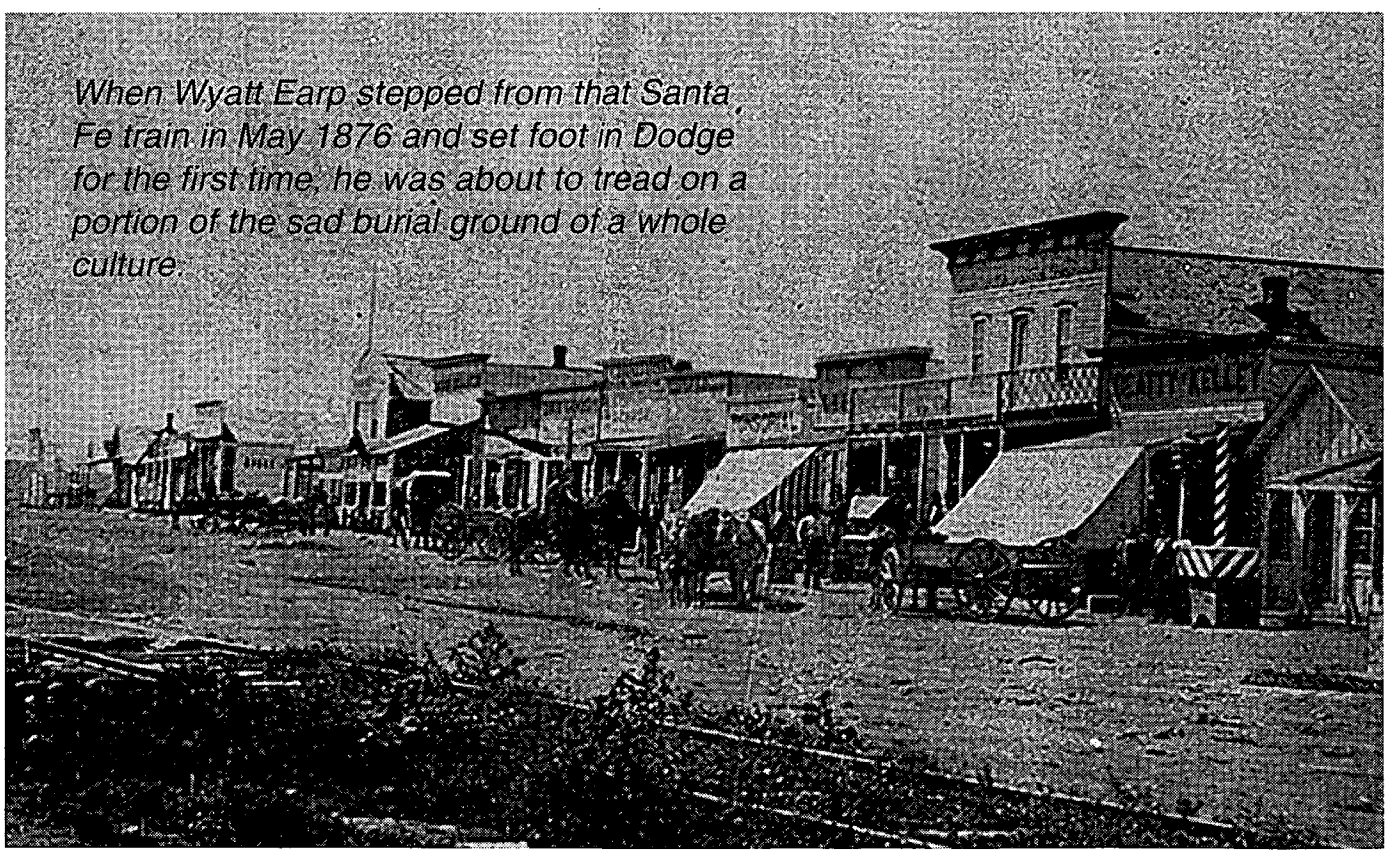
# Wyatt Earp Legendary American

## PART VII: DODGE CITY HOKEY POKEY

By GLENN G. BOYER



*When Wyatt Earp stepped from that Santa Fe train in May 1876 and set foot in Dodge for the first time, he was about to tread on a portion of the sad burial ground of a whole culture.*

Author's Collection

Front Street of Dodge City in 1878, when Wyatt Earp was on the police force there.



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"It was a bear all right." Wyatt Earp is talking to his sister Adelia, describing his arrival in Dodge City.

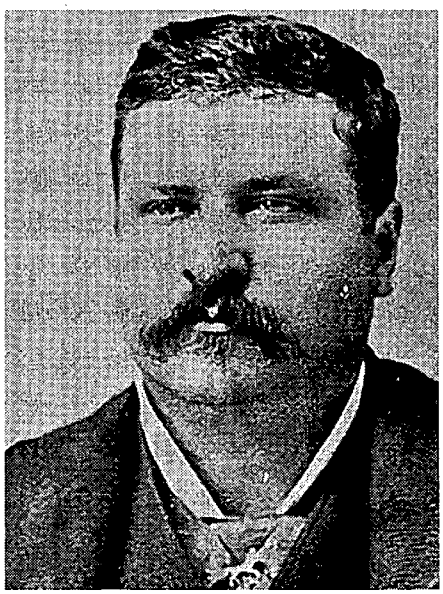
"There was a big crowd milling around the Santa Fe depot. I thought there was a riot and figured maybe my first job on the police force was going to be helping stop it. Instead Morg met me when I got off the train, laughing, and told me what was going on. Somebody had done the bear some dirt and it had climbed to the top of the telegraph pole and was sitting there when I got off the train. They'd *hokey-pokeyed* the poor thing." Naturally the average reader will want to know what "hokey-pokeyed" meant.

A few will know. The rest will have to wait for some background, so that Wyatt Earp will not be harshly misjudged by a gentler modern generation who seem largely unable even to imagine the conditions that made Wyatt Earp and his tough kind inevitable. Those nurtured on the accepted dramatics may be disappointed, or astonished, or both.

Dodge City, as was frequently observed in contemporary papers from other communities, was a living wonder. Many reasons were cited, such as hell being in session there, as usual, but one is never mentioned: Dodge's sum was greater than its parts, thus making it a certified miracle. Wyatt Earp was only one of its parts. There were many others a good deal like him. Bat Masterson comes to mind.

BUT DODGE CITY overall was more interesting than any of its individual residents. And there is more to consider. The land, the time, the elements, and business activities were the principal characters in the American West. The land and the time, especially, *determined* in the pioneer West. Yet they are seldom mentioned in western stories.

When Wyatt Earp stepped from that Santa Fe train in May 1876 and set foot in Dodge for the first time, he was about to tread on a portion of the sad burial ground of a whole culture.



Author's Collection

Larry Deger, the Dodge City marshal under whom Wyatt Earp first served as a deputy marshal.

That same year Heinrich Schliemann started the excavations that uncovered another buried culture at Mycenae and, in effect, laid the groundwork to rewrite ancient Greek history. Schliemann, or any experienced archaeologist such as he, was not needed to diagnose the fatal illness that befell the Plains Indian culture that had to die to make way for Dodge City and its counterparts. It was all recorded in the readily accessible annals of the preceding half-century. Marvelously diverse sources exist on this subject, such as Josiah Gregg's commonly known *Commerce of the Prairies*, but I recommend the memoir of Henry Heth, who is famous for kicking off the battle of Gettysburg, but less known for hunting buffalo with a bow and arrow when stationed at Fort Mann near Dodge before the Civil War.

Few interested in the Earp myth have reflected that the death of the Plains Indian culture, an epic tragedy, was one of the myth's prerequisites...demonstrating the effect of major historical currents on individual development.

So, the Indian was gone, except for sporadic raids. The buffalo were gone from the vicinity of Dodge City and were being hunted to extermination in the Texas panhandle and on the northern plains. The longhorn reigned on the southern plains, and his keeper, the Texas cowboy, also would try to reign wherever he could. It was in the nature of the free spirits who drove cattle and the country encouraged it. The cowboy had a perennial desire to put fear into the hearts of the Damn-Yankee denizens of cowtowns such as Dodge City. If he had succeeded, life there would have been virtually unendurable, except for hardy frontier types as tough as himself. That circumstance brought to the fore such men as Wyatt Earp.

Andy Adams in his classic, *The Log of a Cowboy* has an old trail hand named McNulta giving the young cowboys some advice on Dodge that illustrates the effectiveness of its lawmen:

> I've been in Dodge every summer since '77,...and I can give you boys some points. Dodge is one town where the average bad man of the West not only finds his equal, but finds himself badly handicapped. The buffalo hunters and range men have protested against the iron rule of Dodge's peace officers, and nearly every protest has cost human life. Don't ever get the impression that you can ride your horses into a saloon, or shoot out the lights in Dodge; it may go somewhere else, but it don't go there. So I want to warn you to behave yourselves. You can wear your six-shooters into town, but you'd better leave them at the first place you stop, hotel livery, or business house. And when you leave town, call for your pistols, but don't ride out shooting; omit that. Most cowboys think it's an infringement on their rights to give up shooting in town, and if it is, it stands, for your six-shooters are no match for Winchesters and buckshot; and Dodge's officers are as game a set of men as ever faced danger.

The hinterlands west of Dodge City the year Wyatt arrived were still almost devoid of population for a good many months of the year. The hoemen, who had put other cowtowns farther east out of business by demanding tick quarantine laws to protect their stock from the splenic



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Author's Collection

The Dodge House, which required guests to remove their spurs in bed. Cattle kings roosted there while waiting for cattle buyers to purchase their herds.

fever carried by Texas longhorns, were moving west, and inevitably would someday turn Dodge into a nice farm and ranch supply town with a police force of harness bulls in blue suits. In 1876 hardly anyone thought of such an eventuality. What the town needed was a bunch of hard-eyed cops in high heeled boots, ready to bludgeon or shoot drunken recalcitrants into submission.

As someone observed about the frontier cops, many of whom had been buffalo hunters before they became lawmen, "They usually put an extra slug or two into the bad ones, just to see that there wouldn't be any more trouble, *and there usually wasn't*, particularly when they did it with a buffalo gun" (italics added).

The vanguard of the new frontier reached Dodge with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad in September 1872. The Santa Fe line had pushed rapidly west because its charter required it to reach Colorado by March 3, 1873, in order to secure its land grant. (Land grants were money in the bank when the railroads pushed immigration and sold the land off to unwary would-be farmers.) Fort Dodge had been in the vicinity since April 10, 1865, protecting the Santa Fe Trail and serving as a base of operations against hostile Indians. On the same day the railroad arrived, a couple of enterprising earlybirds set up a grog shop a few miles west of Fort Dodge. A couple of track grading contractors joined them later that day and established a small general store. Dodge City was born.

IT BURGEONED into a town almost overnight. As soon as the railroad arrived, Dodge replaced Hays City on the Kansas Pacific Railroad ninety-five miles northeast as the supply depot for buffalo hunters and for all enterprise in a huge section of the southwest. Bob Wright, later to be mayor and state senator, former suttler at Ft. Dodge, was on hand and wrote later, "The streets of Dodge were lined with wagons, bringing in the hides and meat and getting supplies from early morning till late at night." (This was in 1872-73; the buffalo hide business was nearing its end by 1876, when Wyatt reached Dodge.) Wright continued, "I have been to several mining camps where rich strikes have been made, but I never saw any town to equal Dodge."

In May 1876, the town was going on its fourth year and about to experience its first big year as a cattle shipping center. Before that could happen the army had had to subdue the Southern Plains tribes (the Comanches, Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Southern Cheyennes, a few Arapahos), which they had done in 1874-75. That opened the way for the Western Trail to Dodge through Fort Griffin, Texas. All that, coupled with the ever-westering extension of the tick quarantine line, which put Wichita, Ellsworth, Newton, Abilene, and others out of business as cow-towns, rendered inevitable Dodge's emergence as the premier cattle shipping town (the grandaddy of them all). The fated man and the fateful place were meeting for the first time as a result.

About Wyatt's new environment, Dodge pioneer, Bob Wright, wrote: "Dodge City has been quoted [sic] all over the United States as the most wicked town in existence.....if horrible crime is committed, they say, 'this is almost as bad, as wicked, as Dodge City.' But, in extenuation of the conduct of her early inhabitants, I plead the newness of the territory, the conditions of life, the dangers and associations of a western frontier, and the daring and reckless spirit that such conditions engender."

The principal operative conditions in this case were cheap and plentiful whiskey.

Wright went on, "I also insist that Dodge City was not the worst place on earth and at last I have heard of a town which was equal to, if not worse than, Dodge City, and, by way of comparison, I here quote a graphic picture from the Virginia City Chronicle, published in the 70's, of another bad town:

"'Every man in Deadwood carries about fourteen pounds of firearms hitched to his belt, and they never pass any words. The fellow that gets his gun out first is the best man and they lug off the other fellow's body. Our graveyard is a big institution and a growing one. Sometimes, however, the place is right quiet. I've known times when a man wasn't killed for twenty-four hours. Then again they'd lay out five or six a day. When a man gets too handy with his shooting irons and kills five or six, they think he isn't safe, and somebody pops him over to rid the place



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of him. *They don't kill him for what he has done, but for what he's liable to do.* I suppose the average deaths amount to about one hundred a month.'" It seems that one of the main comparative advantages of Dodge over Deadwood was that in Dodge they carried only thirteen pounds of firearms hitched to their belts.

Dodge had been wild in its early days due to the buffalo hunters and railroad men, and was just about to get a new class of wild men every cattle shipping season, many of whom were dyed-in-the-wool former Confederate soldiers lusting to avenge the Lost Cause. Concerning the earlier days, Wright wrote, "We were entirely without law and order, and our nearest point of justice was Hays City, ninety-five miles northeast of Dodge City. Here we had to go to legally settle our differences, but, take it from me, most of those differences were settled by rifle or six-shooter on the spot."

EARLY NEWSPAPERS and old-timers' recollections confirm Wright's picture of Dodge. The tradition was still alive and healthy the day of Wyatt's arrival. Dodge really needed him.

Many may recall the *Gunsmoke* television series with its Long Branch Saloon; the western buffs among them will know there actually was a Long Branch Saloon in Dodge. Chalk Beeson and William H. Harris owned it. Beeson's son, Merritt, helped Stuart Lake with the research for his popular biography of Wyatt Earp. (What must Merritt have thought of the highly imaginative final product?) Merritt's widow helped me with my *Suppressed Murder of Wyatt Earp.* In the course of our association she became aware of the virulent, anti-Earp bias among Tombstone's old-timers (and among new-timers anxious to adopt a popular stance, with or without rationale). She was moved to say, "So they don't like him in Tombstone? That's their problem. In Dodge we do." By "we" she meant Dodge as an entity, and with good reason. The old-timers who knew his commendable record in Dodge stayed there,

Author's Collection

William H. "Sundown" Harris was co-owner, with Chalk Beeson, of the Long Branch Saloon.

and their descendants remain there still.

By contrast, the solid citizens of Tombstone who supported the Earps left with the decline of the mines. No descendant of that class, which would have nothing but good to say about the Earps, remains in the town or the near vicinity. As a result, many newcomers too-readily adopt the attitudes of the Earps' detractors, which accounts for the baseless bias that is almost universal in a place that, ironically, derives its principal income from tourists attracted to see where the Earps fearlessly defended the law. They are stunned to encounter the local Earp-bashing from residents as innocent of the facts as newborn babes, be they the old-timers or new-timers.

JUST AS IT will nettle his critics, however, Wyatt Earp's record in Dodge will probably disappoint the reader nursed on Stuart Lake's dramatics. For instance, though Wyatt may have shot a man there, he certainly did not kill one outright, and he never shot pistols out of some innocent's hands or winged "half-a-hundred" bad men in the arm or shoulder, to be questioned by Bat Masterson (a stooge whom Stuart Lake had on hand each time), "Why didn't you kill him?" and Wyatt laconically responding, "Didn't have to." (That Wyatt did not need to kill his adversaries is true.)

Wyatt's wife, who accompanied him back to Dodge in 1883 was most impressed by the local ladies' recollection that, "When Mr. Earp was on duty a lady knew it was safe to walk on the streets." That says a lot about the role of the cowtown marshal. In an era that universally respected ladies, drunks could still get out of hand, and drunks were Dodge's biggest problem, homicidal or otherwise. Tramps were another. Old-timers in Dodge told a story of one tramp who came to town and saw a woman leaving her home. He decided to try the door and do a little pilfering if it was unlocked. The lady had gone just next door and left her baby in its crib—teething on a six-shooter. The tramp took one look and sloped. If it didn't happen it could have in Dodge.

DODGE IN ITS early days was energized by the necessity to supply a vast expanse of the southern plains, a region only recently penetrated by Anglos, plus the lucrative Texas cattle-shipping business. A special word is necessary about cattle driving. The evidence indicates that trail-driving had become something of a sport by 1876. The arrival of a railroad in Denison, Texas, in the early 1870s should have put an end to any market drives to shipping points farther away than that, yet drives to Kansas and beyond continued well into the 1880s, and the final closing of the trails in Kansas gave rise to a movement to establish a National Trail along the western border of Kansas, all the way to Montana. Why?

Read the memoirs on the subject. The men engaged in cattle driving loved the excitement, even the hardship; there was an obvious bonding among males akin to cliques of hunters and fisherman who get together year after year. Its romance is evident, dimly sensed even by movie-goers who see the pale, often ludicrous, screen reproductions of cattle drives.

Here is what the June 8, 1878, *Dodge City Times* had to say in extenu-



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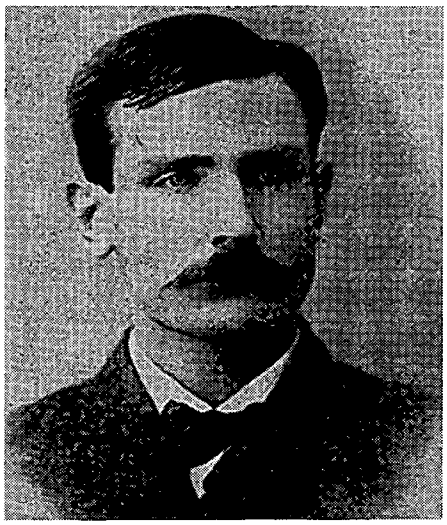

Author's Collection

Jim Masterson, brother of the more famous Bat, a policeman under Deputy Marshal Wyatt Earp.

ation of the way the town was perceived from afar:

> Newspaper correspondents are apt to give the worst phase of social life in Dodge City, but Bona in the Pueblo Chieftain, [sic] does not make an overdrawn picture. We make a few extracts on things generally:
>
> Dodge City contains about one thousand regular inhabitants, but during the cattle season it swells to several times that number of people, which of course makes it good for hotels, restaurants, saloons and other caterers to the wants of the cow boys and cow owners.
>
> The average Texas cow man gambles, and to supply this want almost, if not every saloon in the city, has one or more gambling tables. Faro, monte, and the other usual games are dealt openly, and most of the saloons have a private room for the votaries of draw poker.
>
> Three dance houses are in full blast and appear to be making money. The cow boy is apt to spend his money liberally when he gets paid off after his long drive from Texas, and the pimps, gamblers and prostitutes who spend the winter in Kansas City and other large towns, generally manage to get to the point where the boys are paid off so as to give them a good chance to invest their money in fun. The people who own Dodge City and live there do not look with favor on the advent of these classes, and only tolerate them because they cannot well help themselves [italics added]. They follow the annual cattle drive like vultures follow an army, and disappear at the end of the cattle driving and shipping season. It is this feature of the business that makes people averse to the Texas cattle business coming to their towns, and Dodge has already a strong element opposed to cattle coming there to be shipped.
>
> Dodge City is the county seat of Ford county, and has an excellent two story brick court house, a first rate graded school, a Union church, two newspapers, and all the appliances of religion and civilization found in other towns of its size in Kansas. Extremes meet here, and Dodge can show some of the best as well as some of the worst elements of frontier life.
>
> There are but few eastern cattle buyers here as yet, but several of the owners of small herds have sold out to the owners of large bunches. The prices realized are about as follows: Two year old steers $12, cows $15, two year old heifers $11, yearlings $8, three year old steers $17, and four year olds $19.

Pretty tame stuff, though the essence of what made Dodge tick. But how about this item, from the same issue of the *Times* in the very next column:

> DENTISTRY
>
> J.H. Holliday, Dentist, very respectfully offers his professional services for the citizens of Dodge City and surrounding country during the summer. Office at room No. 24, Dodge House. Where satisfaction is not given money will be refunded.

Yes, folks, that's our friend, Doc Holliday.

In view of the above news articles on Dodge and its shipping season business, the reader will understand this item from the August 10th *Times* of the following year:

> GAMBLING AND PROSTITUTION
>
> The City Council of Dodge City have passed ordinances providing for the arrest and fine of all persons engaged in gambling and prostitution. An official copy of the ordinances is published on another page of the TIMES, and the attention of parties interested is directed to the promulgation of the new code of the city's laws.
>
> There was a slight murmur (or "kick" as it is termed in Dodge) upon the announcement of the actions of the Council; but the majority of the sporting fraternity look upon the matter with favor, and quietly acquiesce to the demand of the city tribunal.
>
> The city was running heavily in debt necessary to keep up a large police force. The ordinary revenues of the city were not adequate to the demand of so great a force for so small a town. It is wise and proper that the class who entail this additional expense should meet it with their own contributions, and thus afford themselves protection under the wings of the law. We do not stop to inquire whether anything better could be done. [Such as ban the nuisance, heaven forbid!] We consider any form of vice under the restrictions of the law in some manner within the bounds of mutual protection. Its eradication is not a question. Where the carrion is there you will find the buzzard.

Luckily the Texas "carrion," to say nothing of the local boys, weren't too swift with an inference or there might have been an indignation meeting, graced by a tree and rope.

Considering Wyatt Earp's bragging that he came to Dodge from Wichita "at my own salary," coupled with the above reference to "a large police force," it is interesting to refer to another column of that same issue which lists the following city officers: Charles E. Bassett, salary as marshal, $100.00; Marshal Wyatt Earp, salary as assis't Marshal, $75.00; John Brown, salary as Policeman, $75.00; James Masterson, salary as Policeman, $75.00.

Elsewhere we find reference to those ordinances that gave this "large" police force something to do: Ordinance Number 41: Section 1: No person shall keep any gaming house, etc.; and Ordinance Number 42, which read in the operative part, "Any person or persons who shall



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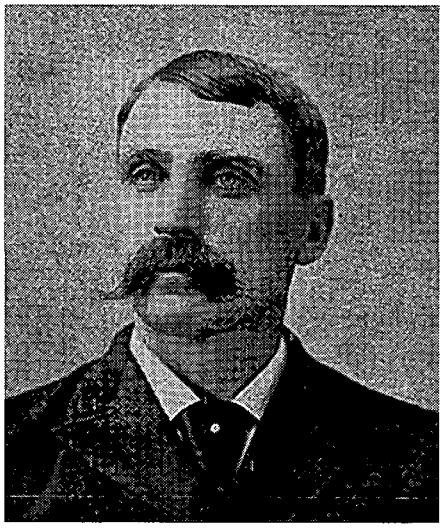
keep or maintain in this city a brothel, bawdy house, house of ill-fame or assignation, shall upon conviction thereof be fined in a sum not less than five nor more than One Hundred Dollars, etc.," and the same for inmates, except the fine only went up to $50.00.

Fines were prescribed for gambling, as well, ranging up to $100.00, and Section 4 specified: "It shall be the duty of the Marshal, Assistant Marshal or any policeman of this city to arrest any person found violating this ordinance, and bring him before the Police Judge for trial, etc." (But not more often than once a month, which was understood but not stated.) The same duty applied to bawdy houses.

That covers most of the Dodge City policeman's duties. Collecting the fines was the easy part. Protecting crooked gamblers, and whores and pimps who tried to roll drunk cowboys, was the hard part. Anyone laboring under the misconception that most of the mayhem directed by Texas men at the cow towns was not fully justified, has been brain-washed. It all made for a lively time.

IN THE MIDST of it, Wyatt was living with his wife, Mattie, on the northern outskirts of Dodge. His youngest brother, Warren, was working as a teamster and also residing on the northern outskirts of Dodge, occasionally with Wyatt and Mattie or with brother Morgan, who was living next door with a comely farm girl from Wisconsin named Louisa Houston, whom he swiped from the Harvey House in Topeka for the eleemosynary purpose of keeping her warm during winter nights.

Much of my information on Wyatt's life in Dodge City is from an old-time friend of his who wrote under the name Ted TenEyck. TenEyck, in turn, elicited information from old Dodge lawmen, Bat Masterson and Billy Tilghman, and some other Dodge residents as well as western pioneers. Other sources are Wyatt's youngest brother Warren, speaking through the recollections of his sister, Adelia, passed



Author's Collection

Chalkley M. Beeson, a lifelong friend of Wyatt Earp, provided information for this article.

on to me by her daughter, Estelle, and her family; Adelia's own recollections of what she either witnessed or learned firsthand from Wyatt; the Beesons of Dodge City; Wyatt's niece Alice Earp Wells, daughter of Wyatt's half-brother Newton Earp; and others who will be mentioned as they are quoted. (A word of caution: the so-called Adelia Earp diary, planted in several repositories by a practical joker, is a fake.)

Since Wyatt liked to spend duty hours down along the Arkansas River under the shade of towering cottonwoods during his day shift, and in the cool river bottom among the frogs and crickets at night, he kept four-legged transportation near at hand to respond promptly to the dismal mutter of gunfire if it should erupt, as it often did, a block or so away in town.

The four-legged transportation's name was Blue. He was a Missouri mule, raised by Wyatt's Uncle Jonathan back in Lamar, Missouri. (Five will get you twenty Wyatt didn't personally go back there to take delivery, though.)

Blue would come when he was whistled up, and stood wherever Wyatt dropped the reins on him, and he worked in a hackamore. To his nephew Bill's natural question how to train a mule that way, Wyatt responded, "For one thing, you don't do it over night. It helps at first to keep some lump sugar, oats or barley handy for bribery. Blue liked bread and peanuts, and chewing tobacco, too."

One interesting document, an affidavit of complaint, signed by W.S. Earp, dated July 1, 1876, attests that Wyatt arrested one Ed Hogue, "found fighting and disturbing the peace and quiet of the city of Dodge," and brought him before D.M. Frost, police judge. Hogue was the former officer of Ellsworth who arrested Ben Thompson when Ben stood off the town after Ben's brother, Bill, killed Sheriff Chauncey Whitney. Lake's fabrication crediting Wyatt with the arrest in *Wyatt Earp, Frontier Marshal* has done more than anything else to earn for Wyatt Earp the undeserved title of liar.

AT ANY RATE, the affidavit gives no indication that Hogue put up a fuss over being arrested. This tells us something about the wild and wooly and wicked towns that fictioneering historians have invented, places with blood lusting wild men ready to go after lawmen at the drop of a hat. Very few men, except blind drunk mad dogs like Billy Thompson, didn't hesitate to risk a rap for killing a cop. Dodge City lost only one peace officer in a shooting by the cattle crowd.

Such was the Dodge City into which Wyatt stepped in May 1876. Oh, yes. Hokey Pokey. According to Bob Wright, it was bisulphate of carbon, a few drops of which applied to anything with fur, brought wonderful results, like a burr under the saddle, only worse. One wonders if Wyatt's brothers ever hokey-pokeyed old Blue. If so, the aftermath must have been wonderful, especially after Wyatt picked himself up off the ground.

**Next Month: Luke McGlue**

**Author's Note:** The first article in this series, "A Fiddle-Footed Family," incorrectly lists Pella, Illinois, as the birthplace of Nicholas and Virginia Earp's daughter, Virginia Ann. She was born in Monmouth, Illinois.



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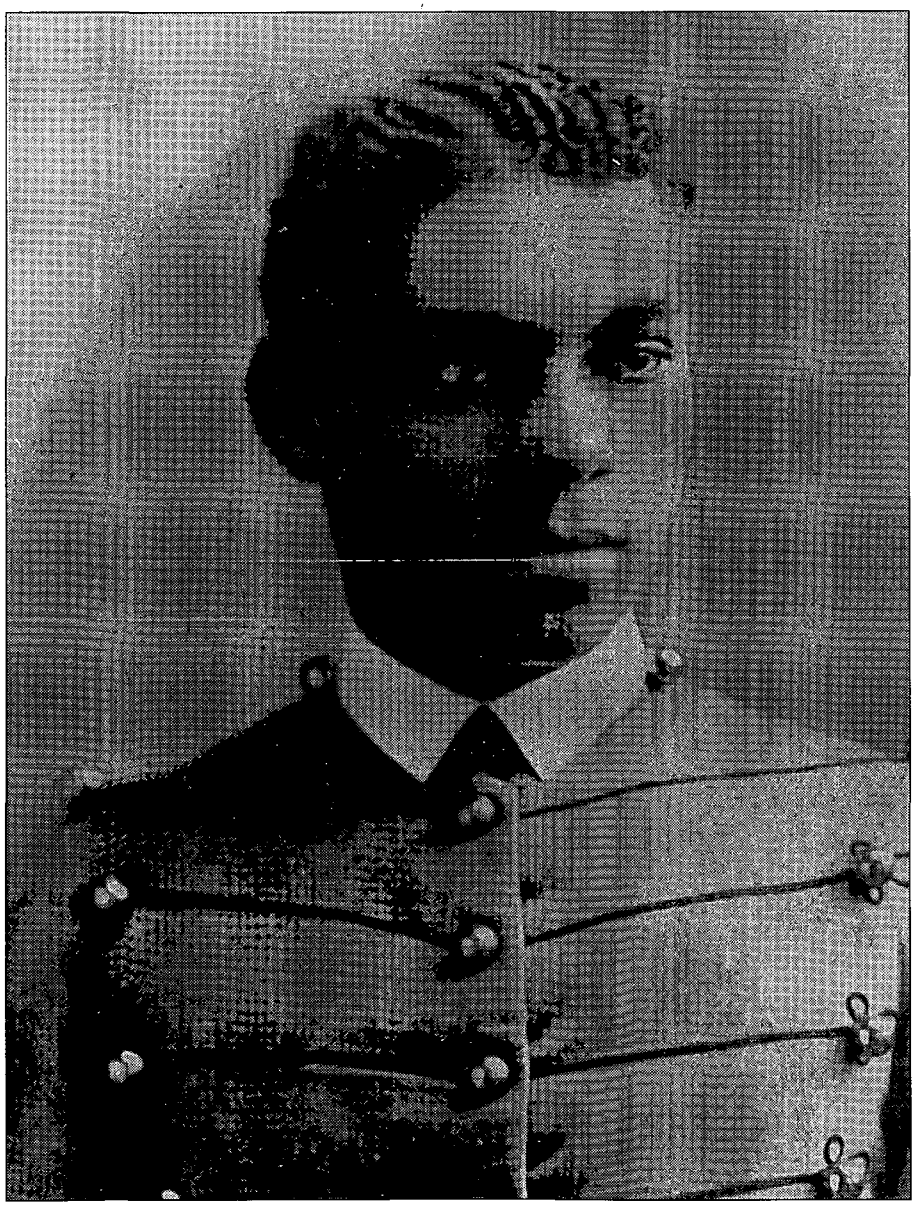
# LIEUTENANT HENRY FLIPPER

By CHARLES M. ROBINSON, III



United States Military Academy

Lieutenant Henry O. Flipper in an 1877 West Point photo.

In 1881, West Point graduate Lieutenant Henry Flipper, the United States Army's first (and, at the time, only) black officer, was court-martialed on charges stemming from mishandling funds while acting as commissary of subsistence at Fort Davis, Texas. Many historians, myself included, believed Flipper was the victim of institutionalized prejudice; I wrote as much in a June 1989 *True West* article. Subsequent research, however, convinces me there was no racial conspiracy against Flipper; he was the victim only of his own incompetence and misjudgment. The court's verdict was entirely correct.

The facts of Flipper's case are well known. In July 1881 he was ordered to transmit surplus government funds to departmental headquarters in San Antonio. Discovering a deficit, he falsified returns, listing the funds as "in transit," then tried to cover the shortage without reporting it.

In August, Major Michael Small, departmental commissary, notified Flipper that headquarters had not received the funds. Getting no response, Small contacted Fort Davis commander Colonel William R. Shafter, who asked Flipper for all funds so he could compare them with the books. Still short, Flipper submitted a personal check for $1,440.43, which was worthless.

Shafter relieved Flipper, and a search of the lieutenant's quarters



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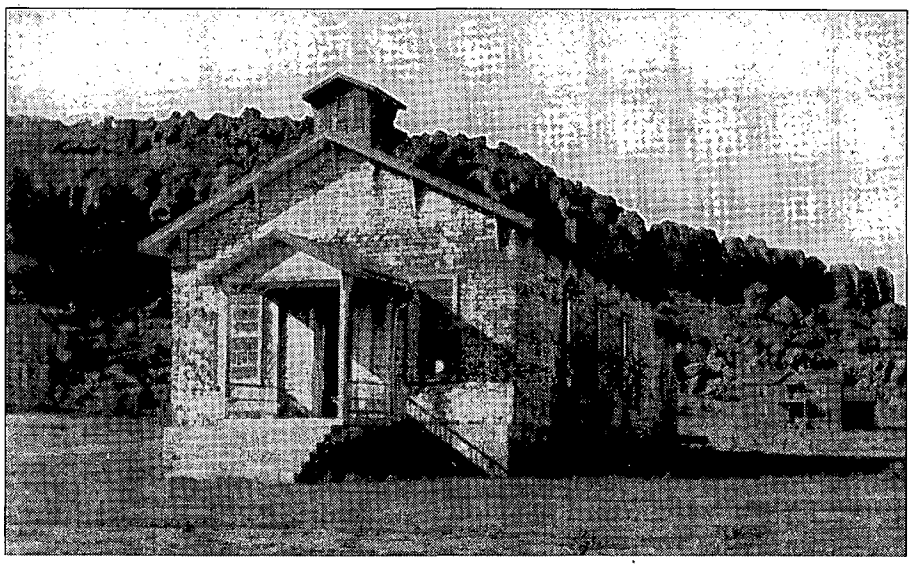
revealed government cash and checks scattered about, and records in complete disarray. The total shortfall was $3,791.77. Some $2,800 were found concealed in the clothing of Lucy Smith, Flipper's servant and probable mistress. Several of the checks were negotiable. On Shafter's complaint, Flipper was arrested and court-martialed. The court acquitted him of embezzlement but convicted him of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. He was dismissed from the army.

My first article followed the then-accepted line that Flipper fell victim to prejudice, and that the charges against him originated in a rivalry between Flipper and Lieutenant Charles Nordstrom over the affections of a white woman, Miss Mollie Dwyer. Shafter and post adjutant Lieutenant Louis Wilhelmi joined Nordstrom in a conspiracy to discredit Flipper. Either through the machinations of Nordstrom and Wilhelmi, or from his own faulty bookkeeping, Flipper found a deficit in the government funds for which he was responsible. His inexperience led him to falsify reports and seek ways to make up the shortfall. On discovering the problem, Shafter wasted no time filing charges, thus ridding himself and the army of a black officer. I firmly believed that when I wrote the article.

LATER, HOWEVER, I began working on a book about the Flipper affair. In the course of my research, I obtained a microfilm copy of Flipper's service record, beginning with his appointment to West Point in 1872, and concluding with his petitions to Congress for reinstatement almost three decades later. The microfilm contained a 608-page transcript of the trial, hundreds of pages of correspondence concerning the case, and documents and exhibits entered as evidence. Through careful reading I concluded that Flipper caused his own problems, and the court gave him every advantage during his trial. Also, throughout the remainder of his life Flipper misrepresented the facts of the case to his own ends.



Fort Davis National Historic Site

The Fort Davis chapel, where Flipper stood trial.

Flipper was the source of many of the allegations of prejudice and conspiracy. He made them in his petitions to Congress and his second set of memoirs, *Negro Frontiersman*, which he wrote in 1915. (Flipper wrote his early memoirs, *A Colored Cadet at West Point,* in 1878 while he was still in the army.) Flipper conjured a new body of evidence which did not exist at the time of the trial, and accused officers no longer alive to defend themselves of conspiracy and theft.

In *Negro Frontiersman*, Flipper traced the source of his troubles to a jealous Lieutenant Nordstrom, whom he said was "a Swede from Maine, had no education and was a brute. He hated me and gradually won Miss Dwyer from her horseback rides with me and himself took her riding in a buggy he had."

Flipper said Shafter's assumption of command at Fort Davis in the spring of 1881 aggravated the situation. Flipper said, "He at once relieved me as Quartermaster and informed me he would relieve me as Commissary as soon as he could find an officer for the place and then he and his Adjutant, Lieut. Wilhelmi, and Nordstrom began to persecute me and lay traps for me. I was warned by civilians and never did a man walk the path of uprightness straighter than I did, but the trap was cunningly laid and I was sacrificed."

Flipper's statements are seriously flawed. First examine Shafter's relief of Flipper as quartermaster, which most writers have presumed was racially motivated. Companies from several regiments, including the Tenth Cavalry, to which both Flipper and Nordstrom belonged, garrisoned Fort Davis at the time Shafter arrived. As he was commander of the First Infantry, his assignment meant that Fort Davis became regimental headquarters. Shafter's own regimental staff accompanied him to Fort Davis. He already had a quartermaster, and he also brought his regimental adjutant, Lieutenant Wilhelmi, to assume the duties of post adjutant, a position *Lieutenant Nordstrom* previously held.

During the trial, Shafter freely admitted that he also planned to relieve Flipper as commissary, on the perfectly logical grounds that Flipper was a cavalry officer who should be serving with his company. Simply, Flipper was a combat soldier and construction engineer trained for field service, not the financial administration of the commissary department, as his own actions proved.

Shafter was undoubtedly prejudiced against blacks; the term "nigger" appears frequently in his testimony, invariably with contempt. Yet Flipper was also an army officer, and Shafter's pre-trial correspondence indicates that initially he was



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primarily interested in Flipper's integrity as an officer. In his first reply to Major Small in San Antonio, Shafter seemed to take Flipper's word that the money was in transit. Almost as an afterthought he asked Small to advise him if it did not arrive. That evening, he went into the adjacent town of Fort Davis and saw Flipper's horse with saddlebags. Although testimony later showed Flipper always carried his saddlebags, the sight of a fully equipped cavalry horse tied up in front of a store during a supposedly routine visit to town worried the colonel, and he ordered Flipper relieved of commissary duties.

Despite his misgivings, Shafter was not ready to condemn Flipper. The following morning, when Small telegraphed that he had received no funds, Shafter replied that he had initiated an investigation. He concluded by saying, "Lieut. Flipper has been a good and attentive officer but his carelessness in this transaction is unexcusable."

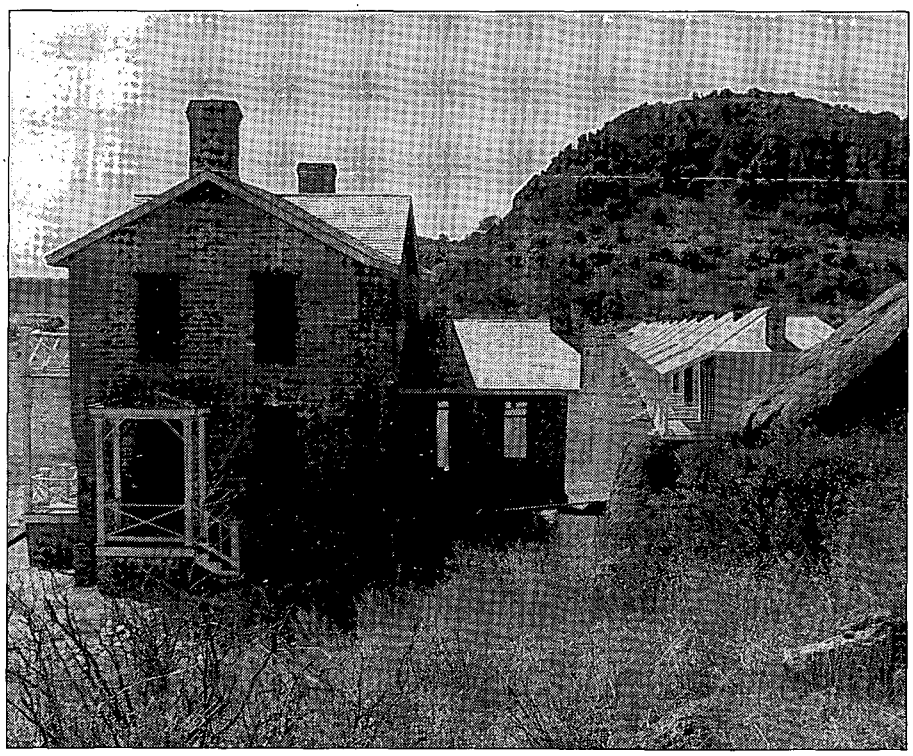
Note that Shafter said "carelessness," not crime; in other words, a bookkeeping snafu by an officer who was otherwise "good and attentive." That was hardly the tone of a man who intended to frame Flipper. Shafter's imagination did not run wild until after he had caught Flipper in a tangle of lies, and after the searches had revealed Flipper's chaotic bookkeeping and the money on Lucy Smith. All Shafter could see was that money had been taken, Flipper's mistress had part of it, the officer's check was worthless, and his horse appeared ready for a trip.

Shafter decided that Flipper planned to flee into Mexico with the missing money, and believed the obvious solution was to have Flipper arrested and charged. Despite Flipper's later allegations, however, he did not yet believe Shafter personally meant him any harm. Fort Davis attorney J.W. Dean, who visited Flipper in the guardhouse, later testified, "He thought Colonel Shafter was his friend."

Shafter's treatment of Flipper after his arrest—impoundment of his personal funds and jewelry, and confinement to the guardhouse—was totally unjustified, and brought immediate response from his superiors. A message arrived from none other than William T. Sherman, commanding general of the army, ordering Flipper treated "as though he were white." Consequently, Flipper was removed from the guardhouse and placed under house arrest. Lieutenant Wilhelmi later produced the personal property in court upon demand of Flipper's counsel, Captain Merritt Barber of the Sixteenth Infantry. Incredibly, neither Barber nor Flipper requested the return of the property, even though the court's actions up to that point gave no reason to doubt such a request would be granted. In his book, *Flipper's Dismissal,* English author Barry Johnson speculates that Flipper and Barber deliberately allowed the personal effects to remain in Wilhelmi's custody, as a sort of "grudge" against Wilhelmi and Shafter.

In the following decades, Flipper made incredible accusations against Shafter, Wilhelmi, and Nordstrom—accusations which had nothing to do with the evidence either side presented during the trial. Addressing the court in 1881, Flipper explained why he kept government funds in his quarters, saying, "The funds for which I was responsible I kept in my own quarters in my trunk....My reasons for keeping them there were that as I was responsible for their safety I felt more secure to have them in my own personal custody."

BY 1898 when he petitioned Congress for reinstatement, Flipper offered a totally different reason. "When I was relieved from duty as Quartermaster I had no secure place to keep the commissary funds and so reported to Colonel Shafter. He expressly told me at that time to keep them in my quarters, that they would no doubt be safe there for a few days until he relieved me and I turned them over to my successor. Colonel Shafter denied all knowledge of this interview..., and, instead of relieving me from duty as Acting Commissary of Subsistence within 'a few days,' waited till the 10th of August, five months, during which time I kept the commissary



Author's Photo

Officer's Row, the white buildings at right, at Fort Davis. Flipper contended officers "prowled around" his quarters, but anyone walking along the row at night could have been considered a "prowler."



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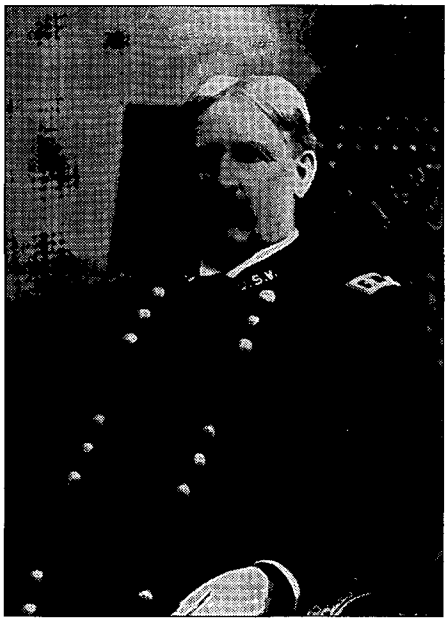

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Colonel William R. Shafter, who, contrary to later allegations, originally considered Flipper "a good and attentive officer."

funds in my trunk in my quarters with his full knowledge and consent, notwithstanding his denial."

Shafter denied the interview because it probably never occurred. If it had, why did it not come out at the trial? Why did Flipper wait seventeen years to mention it? His attorney, Captain Barber, was one of the best legal minds in the army and made mincemeat of Shafter's haphazard administration of Fort Davis. (Like Flipper, Shafter was a combat soldier with little interest in administrative detail; evidence indicated he routinely signed Flipper's weekly returns without verification, thus contributing to the events which led to the deficit). Barber even hinted—without proving—that Shafter had sexually harassed Lucy Smith during her interrogation. He hit the colonel so hard and so often that Captain J.W. Clous, the judge advocate representing the government, felt obligated to remind the court that Shafter was not on trial. Why did Barber not ask Shafter about the order to keep funds in Flipper's quarters? Because Shafter had never issued such an order.

On the other hand, Clous demolished Flipper's statement that he thought his quarters were more secure. In his closing statement to the court, Clous said, "Gentlemen, the government provided the accused with a strong, heavy and secure safe, over which after hours a sentinel stood guard, the regulations of his department required him to keep his public funds in that safe...[but instead] he considered his trunk—a portable affair, kept for the joint uses of himself and his female servant, accessible at times to both—a more secure place of deposit than a strong iron safe, a safe which it would take the joint efforts of a body of men and draft animals to remove." The judge advocate had no reason to fabricate the argument—any member of the court could walk the hundred or so yards from the courtroom to the commissary office and look at the safe.

Flipper, however, had reasons for elaborating and embroidering his initial statement. By 1898, both Wilhelmi and Nordstrom were dead and therefore unable to defend themselves. Flipper then tried to establish that they had stolen the money from his quarters, which a central hallway connected to Nordstrom's. "I had heard frequent stories from civilians about the post that the officers were plotting to get me out of the Army, and because I had seen Lieutenant Louis Wilhelmi, Regimental Adjutant of the First Infantry and other officers prowling around my quarters at unseemly hours of the night."

AGAIN, why did the defense not bring this out at the trial when Wilhelmi, Nordstrom, and all the civilians were available? Why wait until 1898? Why were the "civilians" not called to testify?

Several civilians did, in fact, testify as character witnesses. Most were merchants from town, with whom Flipper had dealt in both official and personal capacities. Their relationship to Fort Davis soldiers was generally that of creditors; they owed the army nothing. Their testimony was solidly in Flipper's behalf, yet not one mentioned any conspiracy, nor did Barber inquire about a conspiracy. The closest thing to a cautionary comment came in Dean's

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Flipper's defense counsel, Captain Merritt Barber. He had ample opportunity to prove racial prejudice against Flipper but was unable to establish a conspiracy.

testimony concerning his visit to Flipper in the guardhouse. Dean said he advised Flipper not to put too much faith in Shafter, as the colonel had already said he considered Flipper an embezzler. Beyond that, nothing.

In examining Wilhelmi, Barber was unable to bring out any professional jealousy or rancor. All he could establish was that Wilhelmi probably was not qualified to conduct a potential criminal investigation of Flipper's quarters.

As for Nordstrom, during the period of Flipper's financial troubles—indeed throughout the entire summer and fall of 1881—he was with his company at Fort Quitman, more than one hundred miles from Fort Davis. Not once was his name mentioned during the trial, nor was he summoned as a witness.

How does this information fit with possible prowlers around Flipper's quarters? To begin with, Wilhelmi was not only regimental adjutant of the First Infantry, but post adjutant of Fort Davis as well. As the senior administrative officer of the post, he frequently accompanied the officer of the guard on night rounds. The layout of Fort Davis was such that any



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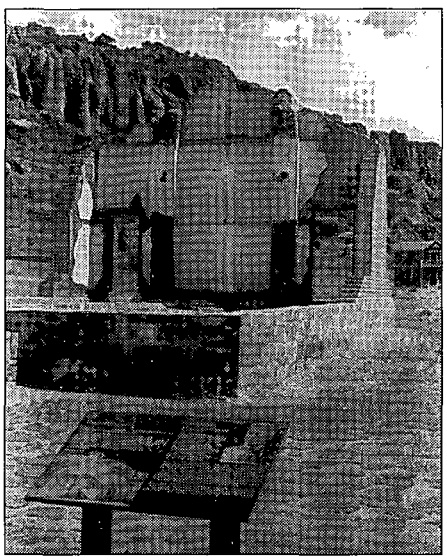
person walking along the west side of the parade ground (officer's row) could be accused of "prowling around" any officer's quarters, including Colonel Shafter's.

Both the government and the defense wanted to hear Lucy Smith's testimony. After all, she had had the money in her possession, and her apparent residence in Flipper's quarters was a major point of contention throughout the trial. They were disappointed, however, for Lucy pled fright and had convenient losses of memory. In rambling, often contradictory statements, which neither Barber nor Clous challenged, she led both attorneys in circles. Her memory lapses covered not just events, but days. She did not remember being in jail, then she did. She did not remember being interrogated. She kept all her personal belongings in Flipper's quarters (including his bedroom), but slept in a tent.

Today it is hard to imagine any attorney allowing such statements to pass unchallenged. In 1881, however, racial stereotypes were firmly established; Lucy's case of the "frights," while disappointing, was not surprising, and she played it to the hilt.

Was the court prejudiced? Flipper later tried to convey the impression he was playing against a stacked deck. As he wrote in *Negro Frontiersman*, "I was doomed beforehand. The prosecuting attorney, called Judge Advocate in military parlance, was the Judge Advocate General of the Department at the time [Captain Clous], the man who selected the officers for the court, the man who had to review and did review the proceedings after the trial and of course recommended the approval of his own work."



Author's Photo

The ruins of the Fort Davis chapel today, with a marker describing the Flipper affair.

FLIPPER'S STATEMENT was patently absurd. As Barry Johnson points out, Colonel Thomas Vincent, adjutant and senior administrative officer of the department, who knew which officers were available for court-martial duty, selected the court in San Antonio. During the trial, the court regularly reviewed the record. Before final approval, the testimony of each witness was read back, the witness allowed to make corrections, and the court, the defense, and the judge advocate all allowed to ask additional questions or seek clarifications. Only then did the court approve the record and proceed to the next phase of the trial. When the trial ended, the complete record was sent to Brigadier General Christopher C. Augur, departmental commander, who could either approve or disapprove the findings.

The original board appointed to try the case consisted of eleven officers, four of whom were members of Shafter's First Infantry. One of the four, Lieutenant L.O. Parker, was relieved, reducing Shafter's men to three. Three other members, including court president Colonel Galusha Pennypacker, belonged to the Sixteenth Infantry, Barber's regiment. Two more officers belonged to Flipper's regiment, the Tenth Cavalry, and their commander, Colonel Benjamin Grierson, was openly pro-Flipper.

After the court was organized, General Augur attempted to appoint three additional members, but the court sustained defense objections and rejected the appointments. The best indication of the court's mood, however, was this statement by one of its members, whom the record did not identify. "If there is an attempt to make out here a case of persecution, that these acts of persecution were coexistent with the offense that may have been committed, I could see it at once, because I am a believer in the theory that that persecution may in a manner have caused the accused to have committed certain acts."

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Judge Advocate J.W. Clous, who demolished Flipper's contention that funds were secure in his trunk by establishing the commissary had a guarded safe for such use.

The member was openly inviting the defense to show that Flipper had been a victim of prejudice. He agreed that Flipper had been subjected to discriminatory treatment, but noted it occurred after his arrest, not before. This unidentified member of the court wanted to know if Flipper had been persecuted *prior* to his arrest.

Barber was too good an attorney to miss such an opportunity, had there been any way to take advantage of it. His failure to act on it is a strong indication that the defense acknowledged prejudice was not a factor in the charges against Flipper.

The charge of embezzlement had only one specification, that Flipper had misappropriated the missing funds for his own use. Barber demolished the government's case,



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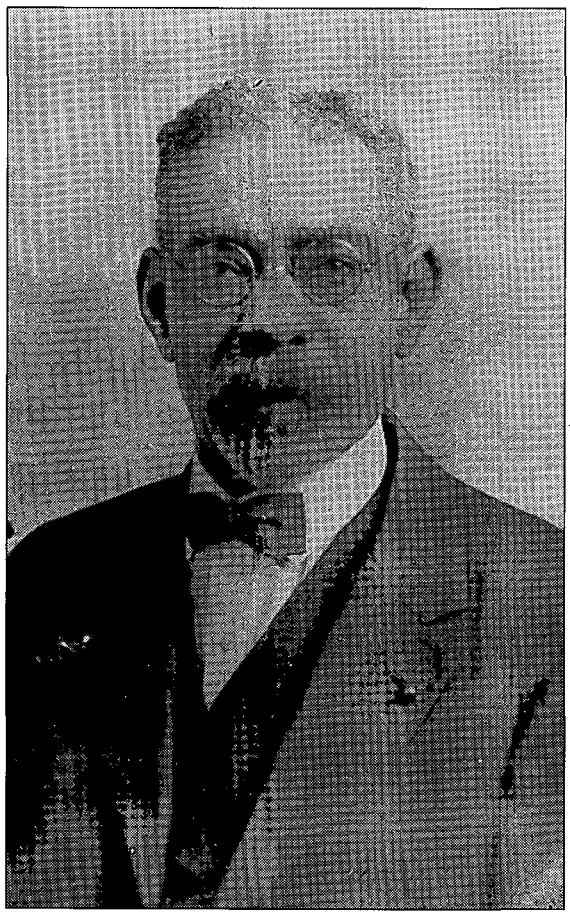
and Flipper was acquitted of both the charge and the specification.

The charge of conduct unbecoming an officer, however, had five specifications, one for each of the times he had made false statements and one for his worthless check. The evidence presented at the trial was totally against him. Document after document showed the misrepresentations. Witnesses included not only the officers at Fort Davis, but Major Small and a civilian bank official from San Antonio. The case against Flipper was overwhelming—beyond any doubt he was guilty of the charge and all specifications, and Barber could only ask the court for leniency.

If any injustice occurred, it was in the sentence of dismissal. In his closing argument, Barber cited a far more serious case, in which the officer in question was suspended without pay. Based on that, and similar cases involving white officers during the same period, it is reasonable to assume that had Flipper been white, he would have been suspended without pay for six months to a year, and reduced to the bottom of the promotion list.

THE RECORD of the trial does not include the court's deliberations in closed session. Therefore the motive for dismissing Flipper is unknown. Most likely the court dismissed him simply because the Articles of War stated the penalty for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman was dismissal. Court members may also have presumed the sentence would be reduced at some point along the chain of command.

When the trial record reached San Antonio, General Augur, incredibly, set aside the acquittal for embezzlement, and ordered a guilty verdict. From there, the record continued up the chain of command until General D.G. Swaim, judge advocate general of the army, set aside the guilty verdict on embezzlement once and for all, while upholding the verdict of guilty for misconduct. However, in a lengthy report to Secretary of War Robert Todd Lincoln, Swaim pointed out several flaws in the conduct of the trial, and concluded by saying, "I would recommend that the sentence be confirmed but mitigated to a less [sic] degree of punishment."



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Henry Flipper about 1923, after spending twenty-five years justifying himself and leveling accusations at deceased officers.

Lincoln's comments upon presenting the case to President Chester Arthur are unknown. Arthur, however, upheld the sentence and ordered Flipper dismissed. Contrary to current belief, Flipper was *not* dishonorably discharged. In dismissing him without comment, the War Department was simply saying that his services as a soldier were not needed or desired—no stigma was attached. Flipper was free to reenter government service in a civilian capacity, which he did on several occasions. Nevertheless, the sentence denied him what he wanted most—a career as a soldier.

FLIPPER'S 1898 petition to Congress was the first of several he made over two decades. The best effort came in 1922, when the actual effect would have been to place Flipper on the retired list with the rank he presumably would have held—colonel. The case was assigned to Senator George W. Pepper, a Republican from Pennsylvania, who, after a thorough investigation, concluded it was a red herring and allowed it to quietly die.

An army board of correction reviewed Flipper's case in 1976. While the board (with one dissenting vote) upgraded his discharge to honorable, it did not set aside the guilty verdict, saying it did not have that authority.

Probably no one will ever know who actually stole the money, although Lucy Smith remains a prime suspect. She was one of several shadowy figures who, testimony showed, hung around Flipper's quarters and apparently had virtually unrestricted access.

Taking the Flipper affair as a whole, Barry Johnson wrote what is perhaps the best summary of the case. "He had not been the victim of a 'cunning trap' or a 'nefarious scheme'; and, in the larger sense, nothing had been taken from him. He had lost his 'crown'—almost tossed it away—by his own youthful follies, aggravated to a fatal degree by his own repeated errors in judgement."

In short, in convicting Flipper of conduct unbecoming an officer, the court-martial board was correct. In dismissing him from the service, when white officers routinely received lesser sentences, the government erred.



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# Chief C

# UTE DE

By RUTH V

Denver Public Library, Western History Department

Perhaps the best known of all Ute chiefs in the 1800s, next to Chief Ouray, was not really a Ute at all. Chief Colorow was born a Comanche and adopted into the Ute tribe. He accepted the Utes fully, and while Ouray advised conciliation with encroaching whites, Colorow advocated resistance. He once told the peacemakers of his tribe, "All Utes' troubles caused by White man in Ute country." While some maligned Colorow for his opposition to Ouray's policies, he kept up his resistance almost until his death.

Known as The Blue Sky People, rulers of The Shining Mountains, the Utes (Utahs) were the oldest continuous residents of what is now Colorado and one of the last tribes to come into contact with whites. A shy but brave and fearless people, they had roamed freely over the mountains of Colorado, Utah, and northern New Mexico for generations.

Known as the finest horsemen of all tribes and as strong, defensive warriors, Ute braves thought only of battles, not for glory, but to obtain horses and other goods for trade. A nomadic people, Utes spent their time hunting and fishing.

The Utes frequently fought with other tribes. When Comanches,

Colorow, about 1887, from *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.*



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Arapahos, and Cheyennes went into the mountains to obtain lodgepoles, they fought the Utes; the Utes raided the Comanches and other tribes when they hunted buffalo on the grassy plains near their camps. Ute warriors could easily elude their enemies by disappearing into the deep canyons and high valleys of their Shining Mountains.

During the 1700s the Utes often traded captive children, taken in raids on other tribes, to Spanish missions in New Mexico. Missionaries, who believed they were doing the best thing for the young "savages" by converting them to Christianity, encouraged the practice.

Around 1812, in a raid on the Comanches, the Utes captured a small boy whose sacred name was Too-p'-Weets (A Rock). They took the child back to camp and adopted him into the Mouache band of Southern Utes. Too-p'-Weets was taller and stronger that the Ute children, who were generally short and stocky.

Because his skin was coppery-red, unlike the dark-brown color of the Utes, they called him Colorado, the Spanish word for red. They eventually shortened the name to Colorow. Colorow's mother may have been a Jicarilla Apache, which may explain his fierce and tenacious nature.

Local History Collection, Pikes Peak Library District

Ute Chief Ouray.



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Adopted children were spoiled and loved, the same as all Ute children, and young Colorow was no different. As he listened to elders telling stories around the campfire at night, he learned about the origins of the tribe and about their spiritual beliefs—that the earth was a living thing and all living things possessed a spirit or soul and deserved respect.

Colorow learned that their Manitou (God) was in the sky, in nature, in the sacred hot springs, and on the mountain top. He heard stories about the Coyote, a mischief-maker and trickster. Young Colorow listened to the wisdom of old Chief Nevava, and he learned to be a brave warrior and a fine horseman.

Colorow grew to be six feet tall with a huge frame. His eyes had an intense, intelligent expression. Author Lena Urquhart described him as "alert, lithe, and straight as an arrow." He loved dancing, as did all Utes, and he excelled at sports.

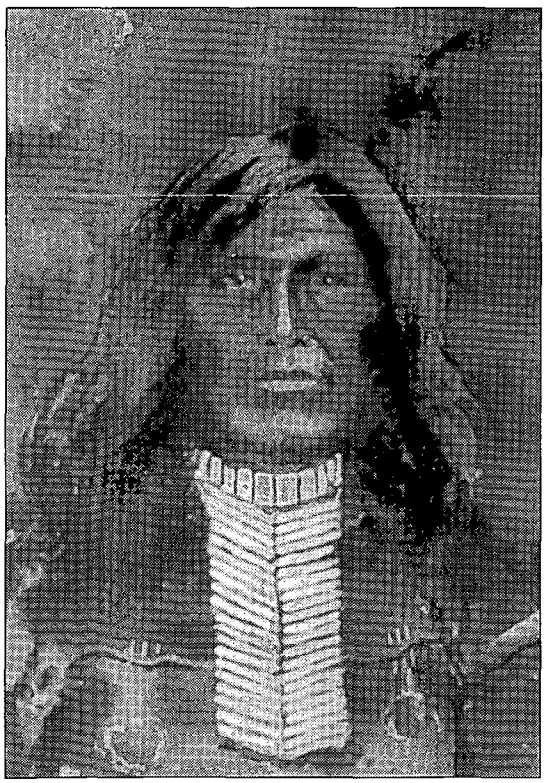
Colorow especially loved horse racing on the race tracks at their summer playgrounds near the Bunkara (Roaring Fork) River and in the Yampa Valley. When he grew too heavy to race on Indian ponies, he depended upon his best friend, Piah, who was small and wiry, to race for him and win a prize, often a Winchester rifle.

Piah, who later became chief of the Grand River Utes and always painted his high cheekbones with slashes of vermilion, was the brother of Chipita (Singing Bird), who was married to Chief Ouray of the Tabeguache Band.

According to one story, Colorow and Piah were sitting astride their ponies on Red Hill one day and noticed that below, on the banks of the Roaring Fork, a group of Arapahos had surrounded a small band of Moauche Utes.

Colorow said, "No, Piah, if this is a good day to die, let it be Arapahos that die! If we go for help we may be in time to save our brothers." Then Colorow and Piah rushed back to camp for reinforcements.

They returned too late to save the small band, but under Colorow's command they divided into two groups, forced the Arapahos to retreat downstream, and attacked them from behind, killing them all.



Denver Public Library, Western History Department

Chief Colorow as a young man, taken from a painting by Paul Sauerwien that hangs in the Ute Museum, Montrose, Colorado.

Because of his victory in the battle at Red Hill, Colorow was made chief of the Yampa Band of Northern Utes. The next winter, when he went to Taos, he bought a black felt hat and placed the feather of a golden eagle in the headband—the mark of a war chief. After that, he attended all the councils of the seven Ute tribes: Mouache, Capote, and Weeminuche (Southern Utes), and Tabeguache, Yampa, Grand Lake, and Uintah (Northern Utes).

Some time after that when he was in a Cheyenne camp, he was offered the hand of the Cheyenne maiden, Moon Flower, in marriage. When he refused, he enraged her brother and lost the friendship of that tribe. However, Chief Colorow was not without sentiment.

Colorow said in his later years that when he was a young boy, a beautiful white girl was found wandering in the mountains. She had become lost from her family while traveling through Ute country to California. The Indians took her back to camp and adopted her into the tribe. Her name was Recha.

COLOROW FELL madly in love with Recha, and married her. He gave her a horse and they rode together for years. One day he took her to the Yampah hot springs in Glenwood Canyon and bought her a fine saddle and bridle. As she rode along the bank of the Roaring Fork, a bear came out of the water and frightened her horse, throwing her off. Recha caught her foot in the stirrup and was dragged to her death.

Recha may have been buried on Mount Sopris or where the Hotel Denver now stands in Glenwood Springs. Colorow was so heartbroken that he did not return to the Roaring Fork Valley for many years. Later, he married an Indian woman.

In 1849, when Colorow was about thirty-five years old, Utes and the United States government signed their first treaty. In exchange for $5,000 annually, the Utes acknowledged the authority of the government in the area. The Utes would retain all their lands "forever" without territorial boundaries.

That same year, a young trapper named Kit Carson guided explorer John C. Frémont across the Colorado mountains on his way to the Pacific Coast. Frémont heard the Arapahos and Utes battling in Middle Park and again on Storm Mountain (Mount Werner) in the Yampa Valley. Frémont's visit was the first government-approved incursion into Ute territory—an omen of things to come.

Four years later, Colorow saw Captain John W. Gunnison's survey



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party cross the Colorado River, where Grand Junction is today. He was disturbed, because Gunnison blazed trees and left survey markers along the trail.

In past years, many trappers and prospectors had ventured through the mountains. The trappers had lived like the Utes, and two of them saved Colorow's daughter from dying. A young runaway boy, Uriah Curtis, had lived with the Utes, and he later became Colorow's interpreter, but none of the white men passing through Ute country had stayed long or violated the Utes sacred land.

That changed after the United States took control of the San Luis Valley in 1848. New Mexicans started settling there and in 1852 the United States Army built Fort Massachusetts (later rebuilt and renamed Fort Garland) to protect them.

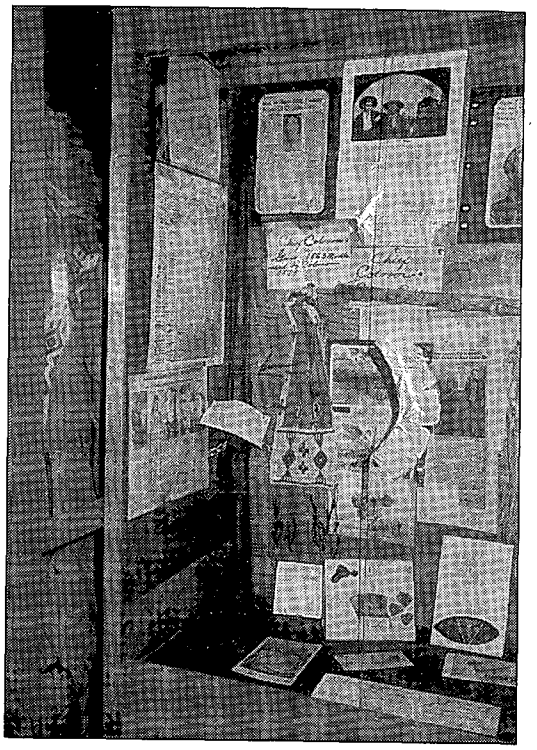
The increased activity angered the Utes who, with some Apaches, began the Ute War in 1854. On December 24, Mouaches attacked a trapper outpost called El Pueblo on the Arkansas River, killing seventeen men and capturing a woman and two children. In 1855 they attacked the small settlement of San Luis. United States troops under General John Garland took the field to end the uprising. After forty Utes were killed near Salida, the Capote and Mouache bands asked for a peace treaty in 1855. The treaty was signed, but the United States Senate never ratified it.

Before his death in 1859, old Chief Nevava warned the young Ouray that white treaties were no good. Many of the Utes, including Colorow, agreed with him.

In 1861, when Colorado pioneer Richard Sopris and a gold-hunting survey party crossed the Continental Divide, Colorow became distraught because he knew his people had signed many treaties saying that the land belonged to them. Later, when surveyors entered the Yampa Valley, Colorow sent Piah out to warn them.

Piah told the surveyors, "Many White man come take Ute country. Utes have to go away. No more grass for ponies. No more ponies, no more hunt." Then, scratching with his finger in the dirt, he said, "Ute's dirt. One sleep. You go!"

They did not go, so with orders from Colorow, his Utes set fire to all the forests on Storm Mountain to deprive the whites of the timber they needed. He and his braves then over-killed the elk and deer, in violation of their own hunting ethics, to starve out the surveyors.



Author's Photo

Colorow's gun, on display at the White River Museum in Meeker, Colorado.

By 1868, gold seekers and Civil War veterans poured into the San Luis Valley, and once again the Utes caused trouble. Representatives of the seven bands went to Washington. Kit Carson, a friend of the Utes since the 1830s, went along as a negotiator.

Because Chief Ouray was multilingual, having been raised with a Spanish family, and more sophisticated than other chiefs, the government named him head of the Utes, the one they would deal with. That caused dissension within the tribe, because all chiefs of the seven bands were considered equal. Also, many of them disagreed with Ouray's manner of compromising with whites to keep peace. The northern Utes wanted Colorow to represent them; Colorow didn't go to Washington.

In the treaty of 1868 (which the Utes thought of as the "Kit Carson Treaty"), the Utes lost the San Luis Valley and central Colorado, but they were to receive educational

Author's Photo

A building at Fort Garland, Colorado, as it appears today. The army established Fort Garland in 1858 to protect settlers from Utes.



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facilities, land allotments, and $60,000 a year. Also, all whites were barred from the western slope of the Colorado Rockies. Ouray insisted that the treaty must be "final forever"—it lasted just five years.

The various treaties brought disagreements within the tribe, and some Utes conspired to replace him. Five sub-chiefs from Ouray's own band, his brother-in-law leading them, tried to assassinate him in 1872. Ouray also survived other assassination plots.

Gold had been discovered at Hahn's Peak in 1861, and by 1870 Middle Park was being settled. Lulita Crawford Pritchett, in her book *Cabin at Medicine Springs*, tells that when the Crawfords (the first white settlers in Steamboat Springs) were setting up camp in Middle Park, Colorow rode up to them, pointed to the east, and said, "Too many house. Too many White man. Two sleeps, you go!"

In the new territory of Colorado, gold was everywhere and settlers took land at the same time as treaties were being signed. Prospectors invaded Ute territory in the San Juan Mountains looking for gold. Ouray asked the government for help, and in 1873, with the Brunot Treaty, the Utes ceded the ore-rich San Juan Mountains to the United States in exchange for hunting rights and tribal annuities of $25,000 a year.

*A massive man, over 200 pounds, Colorow terrified settlers, peering through cabin windows, bare to his waist, painted ochre and vermilion, or dressed in his huge buffalo robe. He frightened ranch wives by threatening to kidnap their children if they did not give him their daughters.*

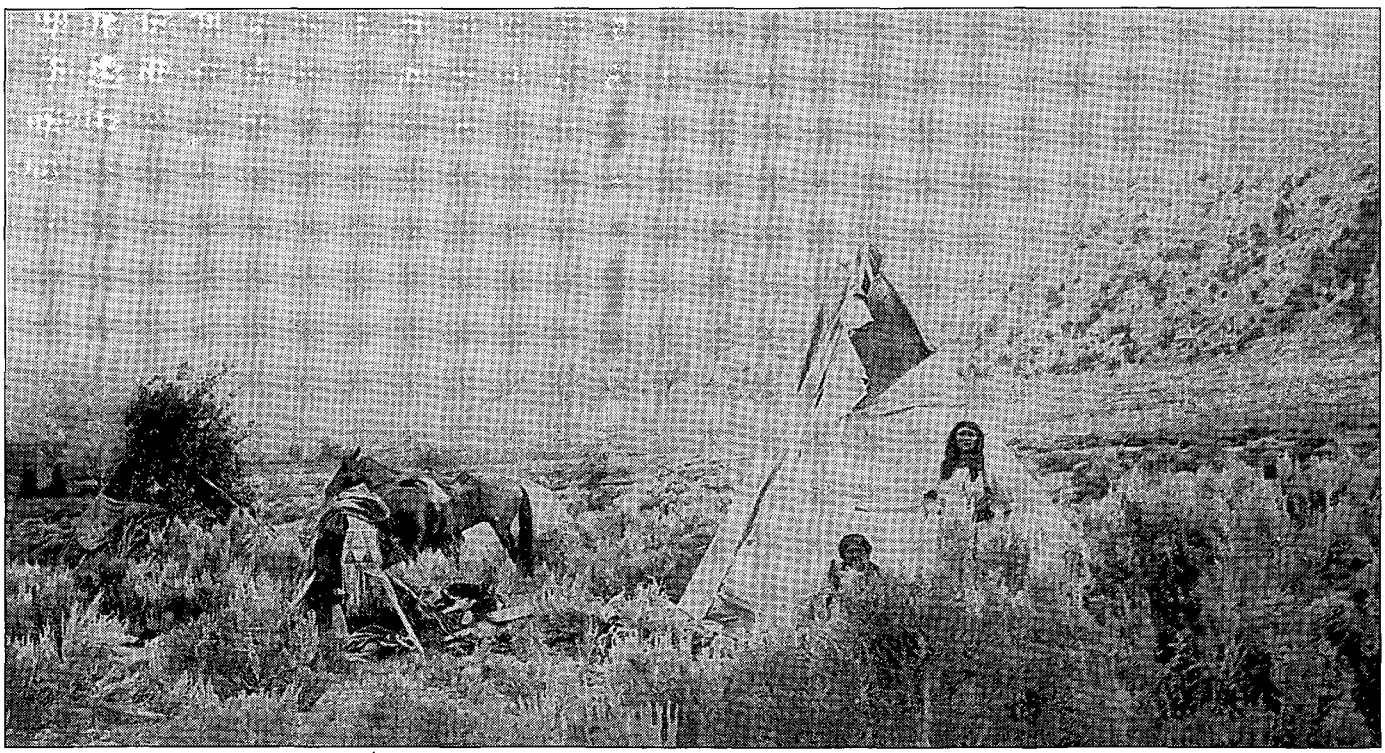
Ouray then gave the order to tribal members that settlers were to be evicted from Ute land, but he did not realize how determined Colorow would be. A massive man, by then over 200 pounds, Colorow terrified settlers, peering through cabin windows, bare to his waist, painted ochre and vermilion, or dressed in his huge buffalo robe. He frightened ranch wives by threatening to kidnap their children if they did not give him their daughters.

Jan Petit, in *Utes*, relates the story of settler John Mandeville, who said Colorow tried to trade for his wife and baby by offering first two, then four, then six ponies. When he told Colorow that white men did not sell their wives and babies, the disgusted Ute rode off, calling out over his shoulder, "White man heap damn fool!"

In his memoirs, S. M. Buzzard recalled that Colorow stole horses, killed cattle, and had a "discontented spirit." One day Colorow went to Buzzard's ranch about sundown, got off his pony, went inside, and sat on the floor at the back of the room. He didn't talk, just made motions with his head. He wore his usual red blanket and a .44 caliber revolver strapped to his side.

Buzzard said Colorow's "eyes were like a cat's, watching a mouse play. About dark he rode away, without even a grunt. We had intended to invite him to eat when we finished our meal. We often did that with Indians."

Colorow chased Divide Creek settler William Grant off his land and



Local History Collection, Pikes Peak Library District

Ute Indians camped near Meeker, Colorado, in 1884.



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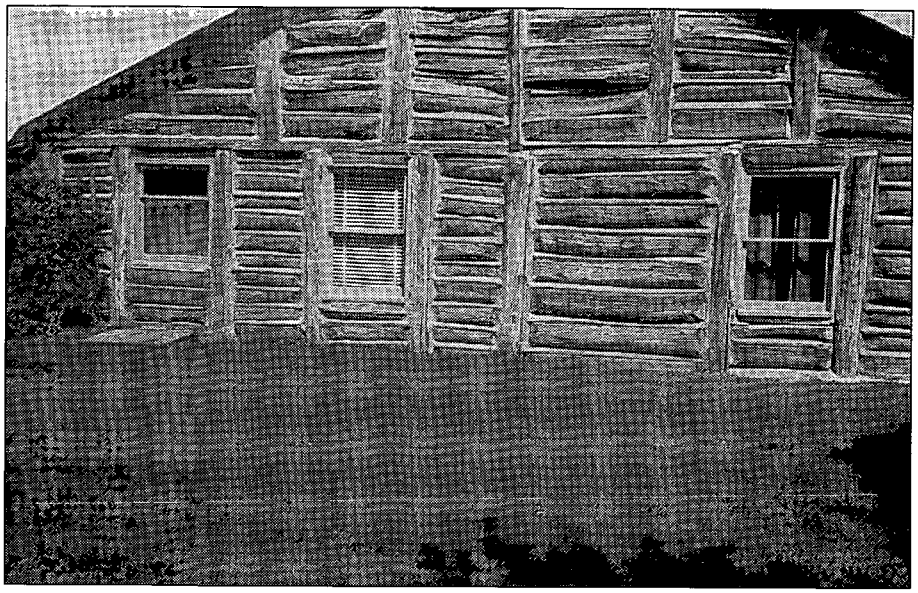
burned his cabin. He ordered miners at Aspen to be run off if they stepped on Ute land. Other Northern Utes supported him, and refused to recognize Ouray as their leader.

By now, the government had established a Ute agency in Denver, and bands of Utes wandered through the Pikes Peak region, begging food and clothing. Colorow became a nomad, thinking that whites owed him free food because they had taken Ute land. He would go to the agency, but refused to stay on a reservation. Colorow's Northern Utes camped at Red Rocks southwest of Denver, setting up ten or twenty tepees. They also used a cave at Red Rocks, known as Colorow's Cave.

In Denver the Utes learned about living from saloon keepers, gunsmiths, and gamblers, and discovered they should wear more than a breechclout in town. Colorow liked to play Canute, a version of their old shell game, and he craved white man's food, especially biscuits and candy. He often showed up at houses asking for payment—for land taken from his people—in biscuits, topped with sugar or syrup. Through over-indulgence in such food and a sedentary life void of fighting or hunting, Colorow soon weighed 250 pounds.

IN 1876, Colorado became a new state. When Colorow and Piah went to the mountains to police the reservation, they found a survey crew fencing in the Medicine Spring—the Utes' sacred place. William Byers, an editor of the *Rocky Mountain News* and Ute antagonist, had claimed the hot spring. He banned Colorow from taking rheumatism treatments there.

In September 1879, Colorow played a part in the Meeker Massacre, or the White River Affair, as Ouray called it. White River agent Nathan Meeker, not understanding that the Utes were fiercely independent, nomadic people who had hunted and fought all their lives, insisted on making farmers of them. The Utes also loved to race horses, and when Meeker plowed up their favorite race track, Chief Johnson used gunfire to stop the plowing.



Author's Photo

One of the original buildings at Meeker, Colorado, site of the Meeker Massacre in September 1879.

At that time, Colorow and Piah were burning grass in Middle Park, which they did every year to insure good grazing. When they heard rumors of trouble at the White River Agency, they rode that way.

Frightened, Meeker telegraphed for troops to protect the agency. However, at the urging of a White River chief named Jack, he tried to stop the soldiers by sending William Eskridge, Colorow, and a guide to escort them safely to the agency and warn them not to fight.

When Colorow intercepted Major Thomas T. Thornburgh and his 178 men, the sixty-five-year-old Ute, for the first time in his life, tried to be a peacemaker—not his most promising talent. He saluted the major as gracefully as he could, then, through an interpreter, explained that they did not want to fight, but that if the major and his soldiers crossed Milk Creek into Ute territory, they would have to fight. Colorow said Jack had authorized him to guarantee Thornburgh's safety at the agency. He even recommended a good spot for the men to camp at Deer Creek.

At first, Thornburgh agreed, but the next day he ignored Colorow's warning. For the next fourteen days, sixty Ute braves fought Thornburgh's reinforcements of 1,000 soldiers on Ute land, using the same tactics that Colorow had used at Red Hill against the Arapahos. Thornburgh was killed. At the same time, a small group of Northern Utes led by Chief Douglas attacked the Meeker agency, killing and mutilating the men and kidnapping the women and children.

Later, at the investigation into the affair, although he had not taken part in the massacre, Colorow explained that a stake driven through Meeker's mouth had been necessary "to stop his infernal lying." He also told of the events at Milk Creek and was not blamed for the action. Colorow and Jack were sent out to round up the members of the tribe for punishment. Only Chief Douglas was jailed.

With the United States Cavalry in the area, Chief Ouray sent for Colorow to attend the last Ute Peace Commission, to help negotiate a peace. The Ouray, Colorado, *Solid Muldoon* reported that, "A death silence fell over everything. Nothing was said and no one moved for a few minutes. Then Colorow lighted a long pipe and each Indian present drew his knife and laid it on his knee."

In the councils of the Utes, if war were decided, the braves locked the



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blades of their knives together in the air and sang a war song. But "Colorow drew himself up to his full height, jerked his belt around and drew from its sheath a knife. He cast it on the floor where it stuck and quivered. He had made his decision." With disgust, Colorow had given up the fight.

The final treaty left no room for the Utes to negotiate for territory, and in 1881, the 1,400 Northern Utes were banished from Colorado and taken with 10,000 sheep, goats, horses, and cattle to the barren Uintah Reservation in Utah. Along the way, stockmen took many of their animals, insisting they were "stolen." The Utes also lost title to their 12,000,000 acres and their treaty rights, and government officials took away Colorow's authority as chief.

When Colorow left the Yampa Valley—the last Ute to leave—he said, "I go now. In winter I come back. Hunt deer and elk." But the Utes had also lost their hunting rights.

Chief Ouray lost faith in the Great White Father, and although he took up farming to appease the government, he put on his blanket and reverted to his Indian ways. He died that year at age forty-seven.

COLOROW DID indeed return. Frequently, he slipped back into the mountains to hunt and fish—and was accused of poaching. On his excursions into Colorado, he rode down the Ute Pass to Colorado City and Denver to beg biscuits and candy. Called the "Coyote," meaning mischief-maker or trickster in Ute legend, he was treated with contempt and suffered numerous indignities. Some housewives threw hot water on him, laced his food with cayenne pepper, or hid turpentine under the molasses on his biscuits.

In his last years, Colorow wandered back to the Roaring Fork River and Glenwood Springs, where he had spent happier days. There the old-timers who had known him as a handsome young warrior treated him with affection and respect.

Children in Glenwood Springs shared their candy with the aged Ute Chief. Nims Ferguson, a Glenwood citizen, gave him a black silk high hat to wear with his moccasins and red blanket as he sat by the Yampah hot spring, telling stories of his life to tourists.

The *Harper's Weekly* of September 3, 1887, described Colorow as five-feet, eight-inches tall, 275 pounds, and deaf. "But he has a devoted following of 200 men who are able and active."

*The final treaty left no room for the Utes to negotiate for territory, and in 1881, the 1,400 Northern Utes were banished from Colorado and taken with 10,000 sheep, goats, horses, and cattle to the barren Uintah Reservation in Utah. Along the way, stockmen took many of their animals, insisting they were "stolen."*

Colorow returned to the hot spring to bathe and hunt for the last time in 1887. That was also the year of his last battle, called "Colorow's War."

In spite of his age, when Colorow heard that a Ute Indian named Augustin was killed at Rangely, he rode with his people to Meeker to see that Augustin's murderer was brought to trial. He and his followers camped the rest of the summer at Trapper's Lake.

When Sheriff Jim Kendall and a posse of cowboys rode to Colorow's camp with warrants for twelve Indians (possibly for horse theft or game-law violations), they saw Chipita and other women picking berries. They made lewd and threatening remarks and grabbed a small Indian boy. Chipita chased them off with gunfire, and Colorow prepared to get them back to Utah and safety.

The sheriff reported a "Ute Uprising," creating panic in the area. Governor John Adams called up the national guard, and ranchers joined the posse.

The posse overtook Colorow's small band of twelve men fifteen miles from the Utah border. One hundred Utes joined Colorow in trying to get the women and children to safety. Colorow sent a young Ute brave out with a white flag, but a trigger-happy cowboy killed him. The Utes responded with gunfire, killing three possemen. No one knew how many Indians were killed.

IN 1888, Piah committed suicide. On December 11 that same year, the Comanche turned Ute—Colorow—died of pneumonia. Just before he died, Colorow asked his son Gus to take him to the bank of the White River. There he died, beneath the blue sky and towering pine trees of his Shining Mountains.

Although the United States government had stripped him of authority, his people called him chief of the Northern Utes, and they were grief-stricken. Ute women cut off their hair, and young braves killed thirty horses to accompany Chief Colorow to the afterlife. His son Gus, known as a peaceable Indian, succeeded him.

The *Meeker Herald* wrote, "With Colorow's death passes into history an important component of Colorado annals, as Colorow reached a celebrity which few Indians attain. He was known to all old-timers in different parts of the state...[he] always fought the restraints of reservation existence, and his impudence knew no limit."

In Ouray, Colorado, the *Solid Muldoon* said, "Colorow is dead. His spirit has winged the flight to the unknown beyond...and the veteran warrior has crossed out over the range...he who was once the handsomest of his race....The musical laugh that did greet the pale-faced captive has twitted its last....The scalping knife hangs against the tepee wall. Farewell Colorow—fierce and noble warrior."



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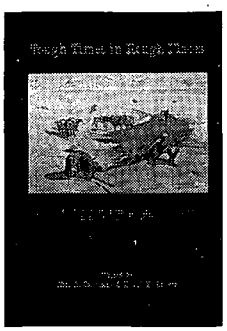

**416—TOUGH TIMES IN ROUGH PLACES: PERSONAL NARRATIVES OF ADVENTURE, DEATH, AND SURVIVAL ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER.** *Ed. by Neil B. Carmony & David E. Brown.* The authors have gathered in one collection fifteen of the best adventures of the Old West told by the survivors. They are stirring and informative accounts—some well known, others more obscure—that are guaranteed to engage the reader's attention. High-Lonesome Books.
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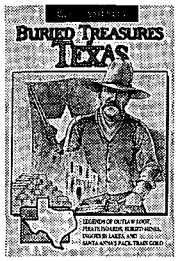
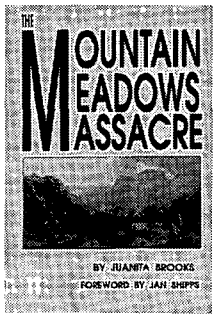



**400—BURIED TREASURES OF TEXAS.** *By W.C. Jameson.* Jameson offers thirty-one stories of outlaw loot, pirate troves, lost mines, and Spanish gold gathered from throughout Texes. These tales are products of the people of Texas: their experiences, adventures, and explorations. Jameson also wrote *Buried Treasures of the American Southwest* (see #174). August House Press. **Paper, $9.95**




**466—THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE.** *By Juanita Brooks.* This book remains the definitive study of the attack on an emigrant wagon train in southern Utah by Indians and Mormons. One of the worst atrocities in the history of the westward movement, the incident has generated controversy since its occurence in 1857. "Completely objective"—*Journal of the West.* University of Oklahoma Press.
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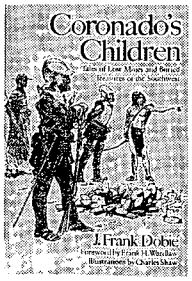
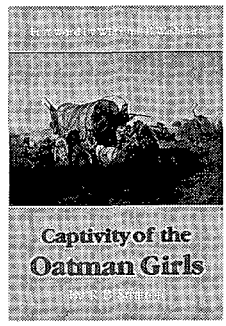
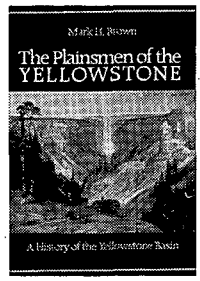


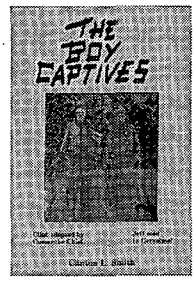

**439—CORONADO'S CHILDREN: TALES OF LOST MINES AND BURIED TREASURES OF THE SOUTHWEST,** *By J. Frank Dobie.* Written in 1930, *Coronado's Children* was one of Dobie's first books and helped him gain national prominence as a folklorist. In it, he recounts tales and legends of the hardy souls who searched for buried treasure in the Southwest. This is tale-spinning Dobie at his best. University of Texas Press.
*NEW SELECTION!* **Paper, $9.95**



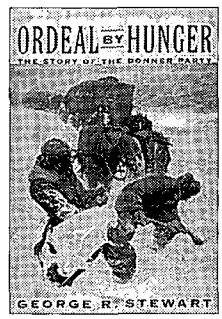

**339—CAPTIVITY OF THE OATMAN GIRLS.** *By R.B. Stratton.* Stratton's narrative, first published in 1857, describes the attack on the Oatman family along the Santa Fe Trail, the deaths of most family members, and the captivity of sisters Ann and Olive. It includes Olive's detailed account of her captivity that provides one of the earliest descriptions of life in Indian villages of the Southwest. University of Nebraska Press.
**Paper, $9.95**



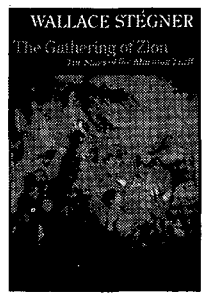

**467—THE PLAINSMEN OF THE YELLOWSTONE: A HISTORY OF THE YELLOWSTONE BASIN.** *By Mark H. Brown.* This authoritative chronicle of the Yellowstone Basin covers a span of more than 50 years, from the 1740s when the Verendrye brothers were seeking a route to the Western Sea, to the late 19th century and the days of the settlers who first turned the prairie sod. It's the history of a dramatic region. University of Nebraska Press.
*NEW SELECTION!* **Paper, $14.00**




**465—THE BOY CAPTIVES: BEING THE TRUE STORY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND HARDSHIPS OF CLINTON L. SMITH AND JEFF D. SMITH.** *By Clinton L. Smith and J. Marvin Hunter.* Originally published in 1927 by Hunter, publisher of *Frontier Times*, this account records the story of two young men who claim to be the only known brothers to survive Indian captivity. Captives of Comanches and Apaches, the Smiths offer a look at Indian life and customs. Copies of the original book are rare. Anchor Publishing Company.
*NEW SELECTION!* **Paper, $10.00**




**327—ORDEAL BY HUNGER: THE STORY OF THE DONNER PARTY.** *By George R. Stewart.* Since its first publication in 1936, *Ordeal by Hunger* has been the definitive history of the ill-fated Donner Party of emigrant pioneers. Stewart reconstructs the events that befell the Donner caravan. Houghton Mifflin. **Paper, $10.95**




**404—GATHERING OF ZION: THE STORY OF THE MORMON TRAIL.** *By Wallace Stegner.* First published in 1964, Stegner's book tells about a thousand-mile migration marked by hardship and sudden death but unique in American history for its purpose, discipline, and solidarity. It is considered the best single volume on the subject. "Superb narrative"—*New York Times Review of Books.* University of Nebraska Press.
**Paper, $12.95**



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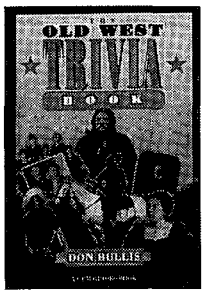


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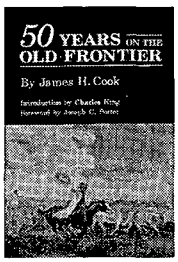


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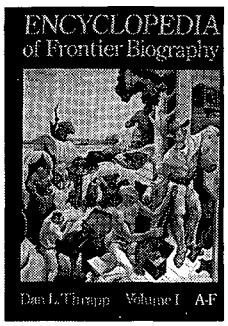


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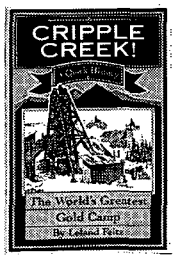


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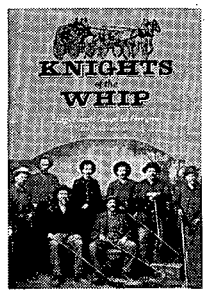


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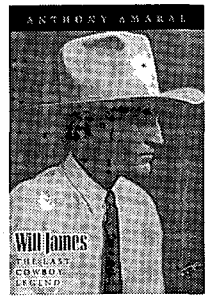


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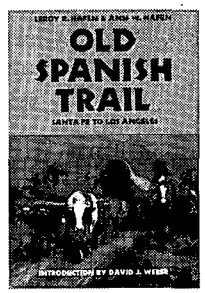


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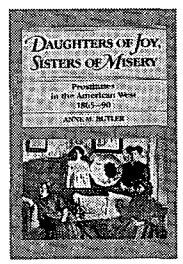


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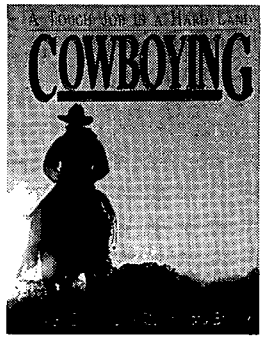


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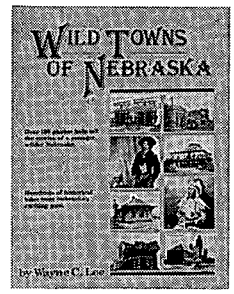


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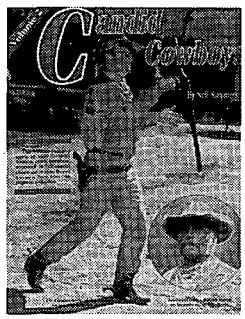


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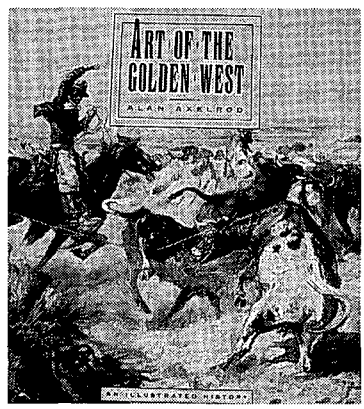


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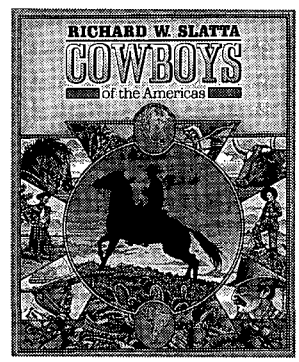


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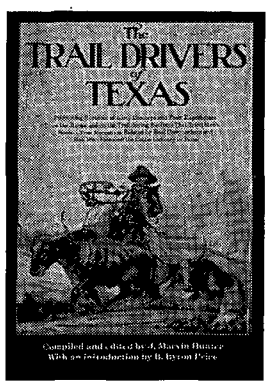


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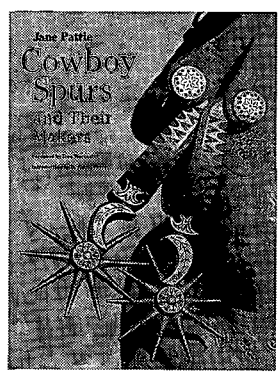


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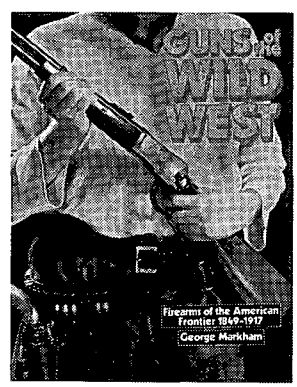


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# WHO WAS *Jeremy Pinch?*

By DAVID BRALY

In 1807, thirty-year-old North West Company partner David Thompson stepped into a historical mystery. He had established the Kootanae House trading post in British Columbia, in part to forestall American penetration of the area, which the company had feared since the Lewis and Clark expedition two years before. However, Thompson soon received two letters, apparently from an American army expedition to the south, warning him away from further encroachments into the region. Thompson could not have known that the letters would become part of a puzzle that remains unsolved, one that has had many top historians asking, "Who was Jeremy Pinch?"

The story began August 13, 1807, when Indians at Thompson's post were grieved to learn that Flathead Indians had killed many of their

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people in a skirmish to the south. Thompson was more startled to learn that those same Flatheads had retired farther south to a newly built American army fort, which meant American soldiers nearby.

The Kootanaes reported that about three weeks earlier the Americans had arrived at the confluence of the two southern branches of the Columbia River to establish a military and trading post. In a letter to his partners, Thompson said the Kootanae's told him that the Americans numbered forty-two men, including two who had been with Lewis and Clark, and "that they were preparing to make a small advance Post lower down the River."

Thompson did not record in his journal that the Kootanaes delivered to him a letter from the Americans. More than 1,100 words long, and dated from "Fort Lewis, Yellow River, Columbia," July 10, 1807, it was signed by Lieutenant James Roseman and Captain Zachary Perch, the latter identified as the commanding officer.

The letter began, "We the undersigned by the Power delegated to us by General Braithwaite Commander of all the new ceded Territo[r]ies northward of the Illinois do hereby make known and declare...Instructions...to Foreigners who may at present be carrying on a Traffic with the Indians within our Territories..., or who may in future carry on a Traffic with the said Indians."

The letter said Congress barred traders from selling alcohol to Indians; hoisting any flags; giving Indians flags, medals, or other honorary marks of distinction; selling goods beyond the price set by the commanding officer; and punishing Indians for injuries or affronts. Congress required traders to deliver to the nearest American commander an exact account of their exports and imports so duties could be levied, and instructed traders to obtain copies of congressional laws relating to the Indian trade.

The Americans also made a rather extraordinary claim. They said that the United States now owned everything from the Missouri and Red rivers west to the coast of California "and the Columbia River with all its Branches; of which we have now taken Possession and on which we are now settled down to the Pacific Ocean."

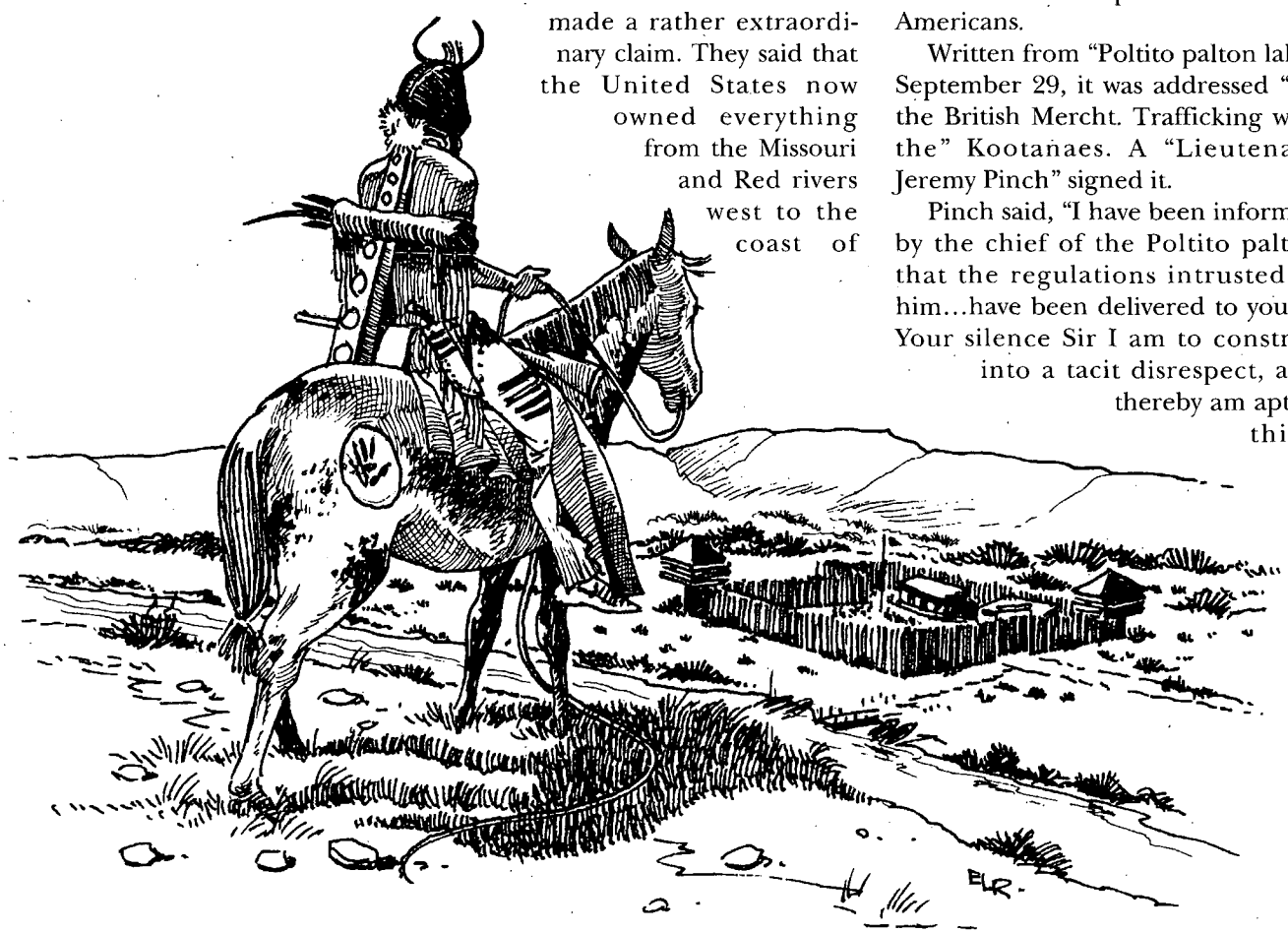
In the letter to his partners, Thompson observed sadly that the American posts "will give a new Turn to our so long delayed settling of this Country, in which we have entered it seems too late." He did not reply to the Americans.

SUMMER TURNED to autumn, autumn to winter, and Thompson spent his time establishing trade with the Indians and trying to secure a steady supply of goods. He also tried to keep peace among the various tribes in order to keep trade—and his own small group—safe.

On December 24, 1807, an old Kootanae chief arrived at Kootanae House with four tents of his people. The Peagans and other Indians were already camped there, and the chiefs began treaty talks. The chief probably then delivered the second letter to Thompson from the Americans.

Written from "Poltito palton lake" September 29, it was addressed "To the British Mercht. Trafficking with the" Kootanaes. A "Lieutenant Jeremy Pinch" signed it.

Pinch said, "I have been informed by the chief of the Poltito palton that the regulations intrusted to him...have been delivered to you.... Your silence Sir I am to construe into a tacit disrespect, and thereby am apt to think



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you do not acknowledge the authority of Congress over these Countries, which are certainly the property of the United States both by discovery and Cession. If such is your ideas you must learn Sir that we have more powerful means of persuasion in our hands than we have hitherto used, we shall with regret apply Force, but where necessary it will be done with vigor.

"As soon as our Military Posts are fortified, strong Patroles will...survey the Country and where necessary and eligible American Merchants will be placed who will second the philanthropic views of Congress in the Civilization of the Natives. You will see Sir the necessity of submitting and with a good grace,—you may evade our useful Regulations for a year but the time is certainly at hand when the authority of Congress will be as fully established over these Countries as over New York or Washington."

Pinch added, "The Pilchenees with their blood-thirsty allies made an inroad into the Territories of the Poltito palton, our friends and wounded one of our brave Soldiers." He told Thompson to cease supplying the marauders with arms and ammunition and tell other British traders the same. He said that he hoped Thompson would assist "whenever we may find it necessary to chastise these scoundrels."

ALL THAT Thompson knew about the Americans was what they themselves and the Kootanaes told him, but he suspected they were not so near as their letter implied. Lieutenant Jeremy Pinch certainly did not intimidate him. The day the Peagans left his trading post, Thompson wrote a letter to Pinch dismissing the presumptuous officer's demands politely but firmly. He said that he was "neither authorized nor competent to give a direct answer to the Question proposed, nor am I politician enough to settle the Boundaries of our respective Countries. If prior discovery forms any right to a Country, Lieut. Broughton of the British Navy

many years ago explored the Columbia for 120 miles from the sea and was the first that made known its Geography." Thompson said that he would inform the North West Company partners of the duties required, and if they agreed that they owed them, payment would be made at Michlimacance.

When Thompson forwarded the Pinch letter to his partners he said, "It seems this officer was on a party of Discovery when he wrote the above. His Poltito paltons are the Green Wood Indians,—his Pilchenees the Fall Indians, I suppose, as it was they wounded the soldier—not one of these petty officers but what has as much arrogance as Buonaparte at the head of his Invincibles."

*Pinch's efforts to protect the fur trade of the United States went unheralded, as did his claims to the Far West on behalf of his country. He achieved no later fame, either as a soldier in the War of 1812 or as an explorer leading other expeditions into the great American wilderness.*

Thompson evidently never again heard from Jeremy Pinch. Thompson continued his work and travels, in time identifying the sources of the Columbia and making the geographical surveys for which he is famous. Before he died in Ontario in 1857 at the age of eighty-seven, Thompson may have forgotten the American officer.

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For more than a century the feisty lieutenant was forgotten, along with Fort Lewis and the entire Pinch expedition, even though it supposedly was larger than the Lewis and Clark party.

The story finally came to light in 1925. Although most of Thompson's journals already had been published, the section that included his entry for August 13, 1807, appeared only then. It recounted the clash with the Flatheads, then mentioned the Americans, explaining they were "in number abt 40...[and] setting up a military & trading Post on the south Branch of the Columbia, whither the Flat Heads after the Battle retired."

The entry created only a minor stir. Historians assumed that the Indians who told Thompson about the American post were mistaken or lying. After all, the smaller Lewis and Clark expedition was known to


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every school child. Was it possible that President Thomas Jefferson had sent out a second expedition that completely escaped notice for more than a century? The Indians may have mistaken armed traders for soldiers or exaggerated the story. More likely, they made up the whole thing. Besides, Thompson had not mentioned the Americans in his journal again.

But then an Oregon historian doing research at the Public Record Office in London found copies of the letters the Americans had sent to Thompson. He published the information in 1927. Pinch, he wrote, "no doubt spent the winter, 1807–1808, on Coeur d'Alene Lake, or some other lake situated in the country of the Nez Perces Indians, and his post may have been located there or at the junction of the Clearwater and Snake rivers."

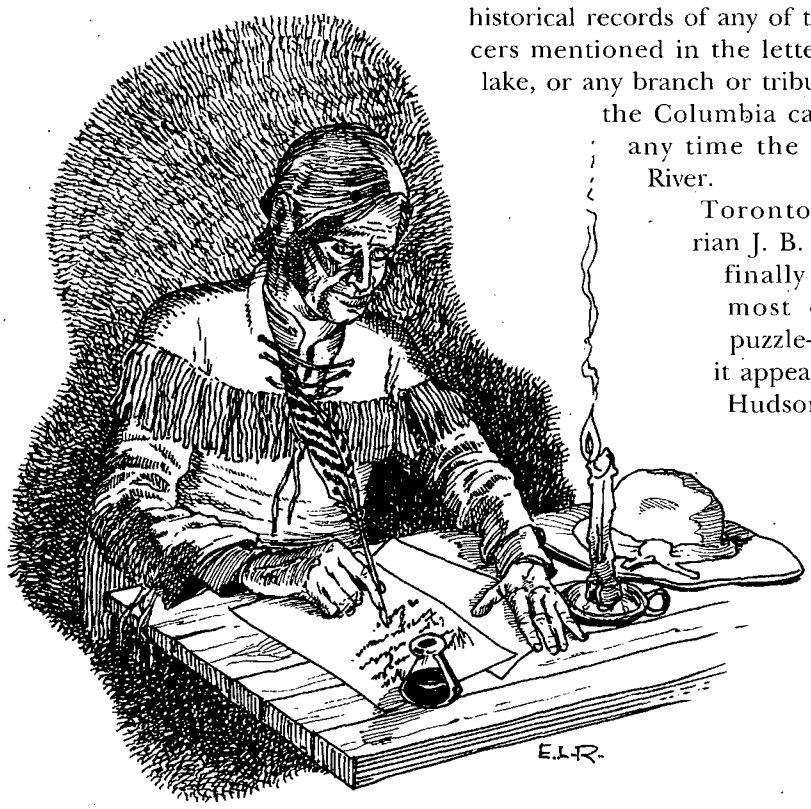
The discovery now created a sensation. No history books had mentioned such an expedition, and no monuments marked its passing. Scholars began to comb the records for mention of it. Historians put pens to paper to ensure that Jeremy Pinch would receive the same honor and fame as his contemporaries William Clark, Meriwether Lewis, and Zebulon Pike.

During the 1930s, many American and Canadian historians tackled the Pinch mystery. In the Pacific Northwest, especially, scholars became interested in who Pinch was and why the government had sent him to the Columbia.

Historian George W. Fuller, in *A History of the Pacific Northwest*, published in 1931, delved deep into the puzzle and noted the failure of every effort to discover Pinch's mission and who in the Jefferson administration authorized it. Fuller observed that many researchers had sought further information about Pinch and "an early settler in Missouri by the name of Jeremiah Painsch has been discovered, but he has not been connected with [Jeremy Pinch]. There can be no question, however, about Pinch's presence in the region and his location of an American post previous to the arrival of the British."

But the puzzle remained. Researchers found no mention in historical records of any of the officers mentioned in the letters, the lake, or any branch or tributary of the Columbia called at any time the Yellow River.

Toronto historian J. B. Tyrrell finally solved most of the puzzle—or so it appears. The Hudson's Bay Company had absorbed the North West Company, so Tyrrell approached it for information. The company gave Tyrrell the full text of a journal kept at the Hudson's Bay Company post at Edmonton. It revealed that three of Thompson's men had encountered four Hudson's Bay men and allowed them to copy the first letter, which was recopied into the post journal that was later deposited in company archives.




TYRRELL CONTACTED the Library of Congress for information on Fort Lewis, Lieutenant James Roseman, Captain Zachary Perch, and General Braithwaite. Researchers there found no records of any such fort or officers. The Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology told Tyrrell that "Poltito palton" was a synonym for the Palouse tribe and suggested that the lake might have been one of those at the head of the Palouse River. Tyrrell believed that the signatures on the letters may have been almost illegible by the time they reached Thompson, and that Jeremy Pinch and Zachary Perch may have been the same man.

Eventually Tyrrell reached a startling conclusion: the Pinch expedition was a fraud, and Zachary Perch/Jeremy Pinch never existed. For ten years, Tyrrell asserted, historians had rewritten American history because of a simple hoax.

In the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* in 1937, Tyrrell voiced his doubts and speculated that the fort the Indians saw had been nothing more than a fortified trading post. After working out distances using references in the letters and the boundaries of the Indian tribes, Tyrrell also speculated that the camp may have been the one John Colter established near what is now Missoula, Montana.

Tyrrell did not have the last word; although most historians accepted his hypothesis as probable, others continued to offer alternative theories. As late as 1963, western historian Dale L. Morgan theorized in his *The West of William H. Ashley* that the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Pinch expedition was actually a group of traders who wrote to Thompson from the Three Forks area. By the time Morgan wrote, however, historians were referring to a hoax, not a second western military expedition.

Scholars have diligently examined the files of the old War Department, the adjutant general, the Library of Congress, the Department of Interior's Office of Indian Affairs, and the National Archives. They have read the correspondence of governors of Louisiana Territory and of Thomas Jefferson, and still have found no mention of the American officers. Their identities remain a mystery.

Historians have unearthed some interesting leads, though. General James Wilkinson, the governor of Louisiana Territory when the so-called Pinch expedition would have been organized, loved intrigue. During the American Revolution, he was part of the "Conway Cabal" that conspired to remove General George Washington from command of the Continental Army. Later he covertly worked to establish a nation west of the United States under Spanish protection, and Spanish payroll records listed him as a spy. Wilkinson was also a trader, and he seldom hesitated to use his military rank or his power as governor for personal profit. In 1805, he defied the War Department by sending a military party hundreds of miles west to establish a fort on the Platte River.

WILKINSON MAY HAVE sent out another military expedition in 1807, with Indian trade his motive. A lack of authorization would explain why he kept no records.

Other evidence indicates that actual soldiers composed the Pinch party. The regulations Pinch sent to Thompson were identical to those Lieutenant Zebulon Pike sent to a North West Company post at Leech Lake in what is now Minnesota only a year earlier. Also, the man who wrote to Thompson obviously was educated and had a good knowledge of the English language.

However, historians have noted that the letters were not written in the customary army style of the period, in which an officer identified his unit. Nor is it likely that real officers would disguise their own names and concoct a fictitious "General Braithwaite." Also, Indians of the region never reported any military party other than the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Scholars have noticed the similarity of the names Jeremy Pinch and Zachary Perch to Zebulon Pike, but Pike was too far from the Columbia to have sent the letters. In fact, no known American army officer was close enough to have sent them.

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That leaves fur traders as possible authors, although none with American citizenship are known to have been west of the Rockies at the time. William Clark, who succeeded Wilkinson as governor of Louisiana, wrote that four parties of traders, two large and two small, had left St. Louis in 1807 before May. The identity of only one is known: Manuel Lisa's, which left in April. Could the other large party have been Pinch's? Without details, it is impossible to say.

The most likely possibility seems to be one that J. B. Tyrrell first suggested: Manuel Lisa. Lisa was a crafty, intelligent, and ambitious St. Louis trader not above engaging in a little chicanery to achieve his goals, one of which was to control the fur trade west of the Mississippi. He probably had the ingenuity, the ability, and the lack of principles to devise and execute the hoax.

After leaving St. Louis, Lisa went up the Missouri into what is now Montana. In July, he built a post near the junction of the Big Horn and Yellowstone rivers. The post was sometimes called Fort Manuel, other times Fort Lisa. Perhaps there he learned of the "British merchant" trafficking with the Indians and wrote the first letter.

WHAT APPEARS certain is that Lisa led the group that was geographically closest to Thompson that summer. The Kootanaes also had told Thompson that the American party consisted of forty-two men, two of whom had been with Lewis and Clark. The Lisa party consisted of forty-two men, among them Lewis and Clark veterans John Colter and George Drouillard.

Lisa's involvement cannot be proven, nor can it be proven that American traders perpetrated the hoax. It appears likely, however, that Lisa or some other American trader heard from Indians about their British competitor and wanted to bluff him. A letter from an American trader might have actually spurred him to greater efforts, but a letter from an American officer commanding a military expedition could cause him to proceed with greater caution—in other words, more slowly.

Historians may never determine the author of the letters, but the story of the ghostly Jeremy Pinch and his men remains a puzzle they must tiptoe around. They dare not assert too much, for someday a document might surface that will discredit their theories. "Jeremy Pinch," whoever he may have been, could never have imagined the controversy and research his letters would stir up. If he could have known, the "lieutenant" would probably have thrown back his head and burst out laughing.



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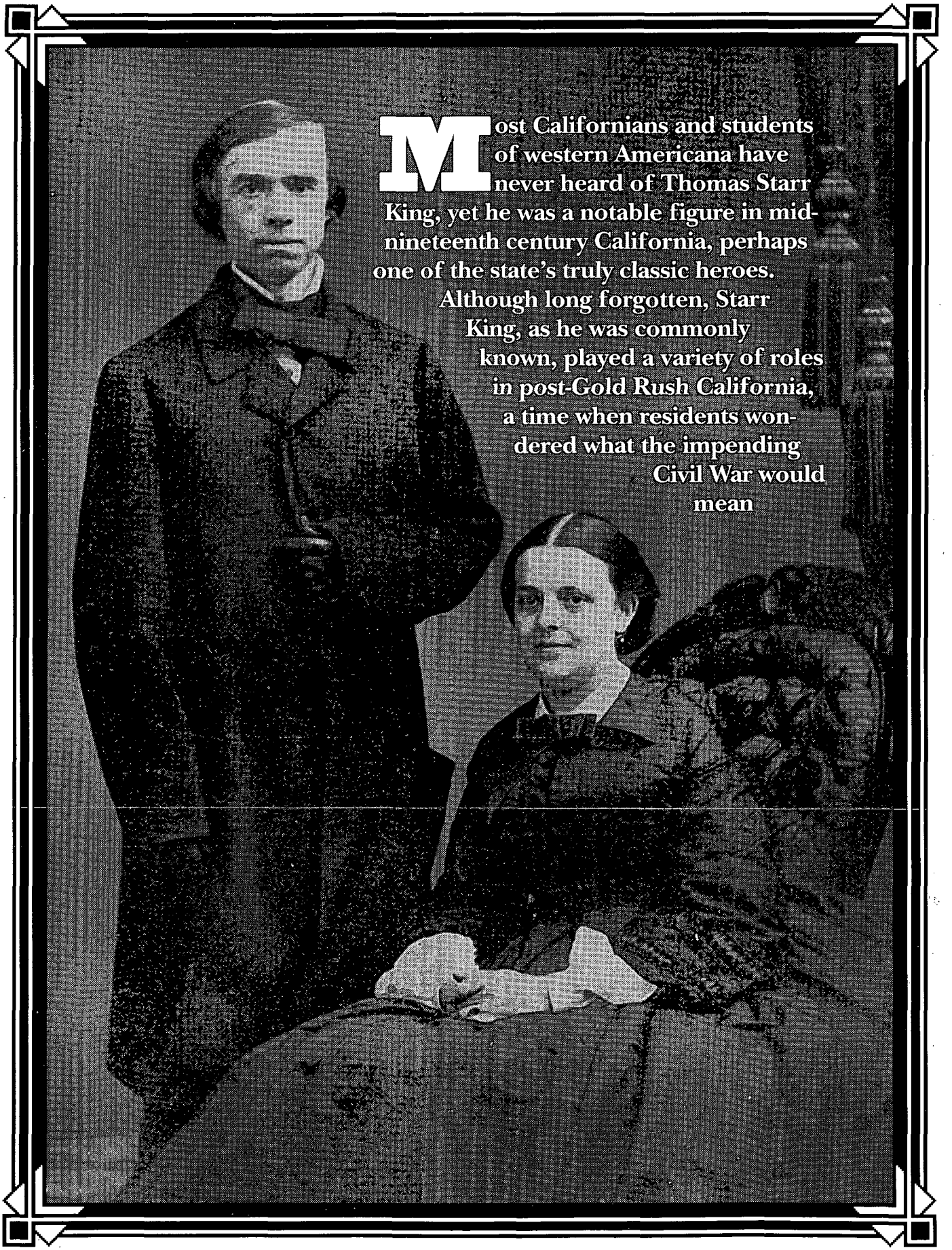

Most Californians and students of western Americana have never heard of Thomas Starr King, yet he was a notable figure in mid-nineteenth century California, perhaps one of the state's truly classic heroes. Although long forgotten, Starr King, as he was commonly known, played a variety of roles in post-Gold Rush California, a time when residents wondered what the impending Civil War would mean

Courtesy of the California State Library

Thomas Starr King and his wife, Julia, in the early 1860s.



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# Thomas Starr King's CALIFORNIA

## By RICHARD H. PETERSON

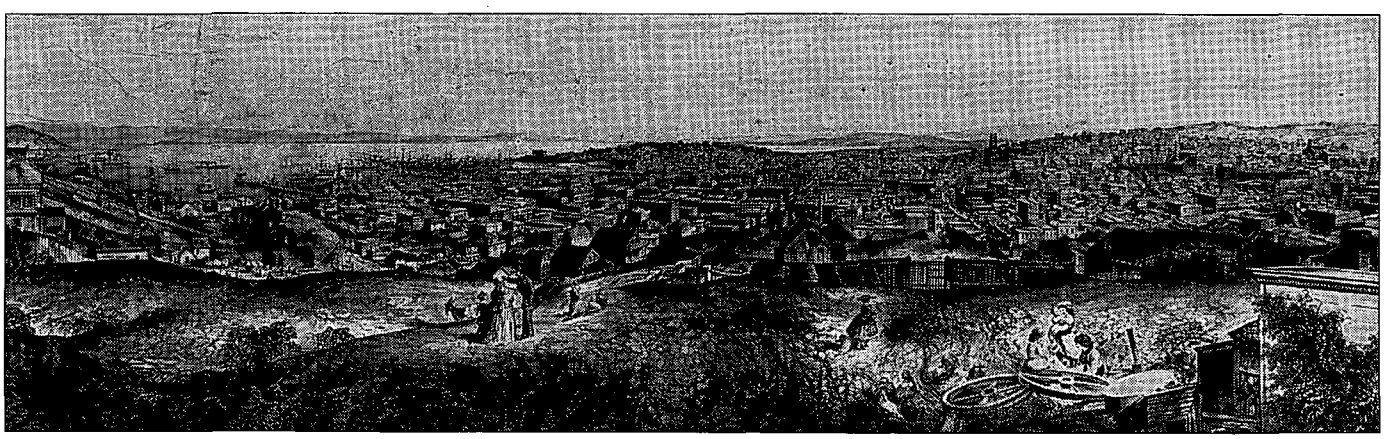
for their distant state. Born in New England, King educated himself there in the classics, theology, history, and languages. He eventually became a minister. From 1849 until 1860, this small fragile man with a powerful voice pastored the Hollis Street Unitarian Church in Boston. He became one of the most popular preachers in the city and the author of the acclaimed 1860 work, *The White Hills: Their Legends, Landscapes, and Poetry*, an elaborately descriptive book on New Hampshire. His transcendentalist Unitarian friend and adviser, and anti-slavery advocate, the Reverend Theodore Parker, said of King, "He has the grace of God in his heart and the gift of tongues."

Not content to remain in staid, old Boston as the conflict between the North and South loomed, in 1860 King accepted an invitation to head a struggling Unitarian parish in San Francisco. In words that reflected the pioneering challenge of the westward movement, he explained to a friend, "I do think we are unfaithful in huddling so closely around the cozy stove of civilization in this blessed Boston, and I, for one, am ready to go into the cold, and see if I am good for anything." With his wife Julia at his side, he took the demanding Panama route to California, arriving safely and ready to embark on what he believed to be his sacred calling.

The Civil War initially raised serious questions about California's political destiny. Would California stay with the United States, join the Confederacy, or perhaps even go it alone as an independent Pacific Republic? In San Francisco, King responded, "Our city turns her face persistently towards the East—signifying that California has no insane vision of independence; that she desires no isolated sway over the Pacific, but is bound by loyalty to the empire whose flag she plants on Mendocino, the Hatteras of the West."

On May 17, 1861, the state legislature agreed with King, killing the possibility of a Pacific Republic by joint resolution. However, Confederate supporters and states' rights advocates were active in California politics and in forming public opinion. Through pro-Confederate newspapers such as the *Los Angeles Star* and the *Visalia Expositor*, secret pro-southern organizations such as the Knights of the Golden Circle, and rumored and attempted seizures of Union forts, ships, and gold shipments, they tried to create a Confederate California and undermine the Union war effort. (Historians have exaggerated that effort, however; in 1860, less than seven percent of California's population originated from the South.)

During that volatile period, King used moving oratory to argue effec-



Courtesy of the California State Library

San Francisco in 1859 on the eve of King's arrival.



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tively the case for the Union. He barnstormed the state on behalf of Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860 and on behalf of California's loyalty to the Union. King's oration even moved rugged miners. One old prospector exclaimed to a friend as they listened from the edge of a crowd to King's pleas for patriotism, "I say, Jim, stand on your toes and get a sight of him. Why, the boy is taking every trick."

King's sermon-like political speeches throughout the state, often inspired by biblical themes such as "The Choice Between Barabbas and Jesus" and "The Treason of Judas Iscariot," helped maintain California's loyalty. Public sentiment showed itself in 1860 when California gave its electoral votes to Lincoln, and in state elections in 1861, when Republicans and Union Democrats denounced secession and helped elect Leland Stanford as California's first Republican governor.

King obviously was not responsible for "saving California for the Union," as some have asserted. He alone did not—and could not—change the course of California's political history, but he contributed significantly to California's allegiance through his popular oratory from San Francisco to the interior mining camps. Once he passionately called for "the doctrine of secession [to] be stabbed with two hundred thousand bayonet wounds, and trampled to rise no more."

King's captivating lecture tours on behalf of the Union also contributed to the work of the United States Sanitary Commission, now known as the "Red Cross of the Civil War." Although Governor Frederick F. Low, elected in 1863, was president of the commission's California branch, King was its energetic early spokesman. In large part because of his efforts, California, beginning in the fall of 1862, raised $1,234,000, one-quarter of the amount the commission received from the entire nation throughout the war. The commission used the funds to aid sick, wounded, and dying Union soldiers. According to students of California history, "It was the eloquence of Starr King that saved the Commission's work from financial ruin." His good friend Dr. Henry Bellows, fellow Unitarian and the president of the national commission, called King "the eloquent voice, the quickening soul" of the organization in California. By raising money to help Union soldiers, King was able to combine his political goal with his humanitarian interests.

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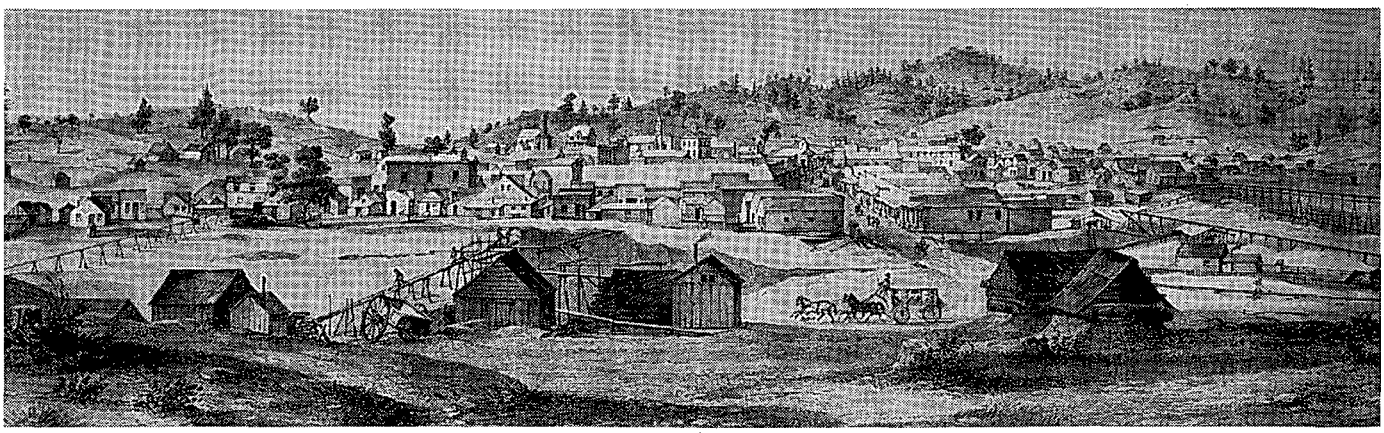
Less well known was King's early commitment to protecting and publicizing California's spectacular natural environment. Thirty years before the more famous John Muir and his fellow naturalists founded the Sierra Club in California, King was writing and speaking frequently and rapturously about the splendor of the state. In fact, historian Kevin Starr believes *Muir's Yosemite*, published in 1912, "was the book Thomas Starr King had dreamed of writing in 1860." Indeed, the March 5, 1864, *San Francisco Alta California* said King's manuscript on Yosemite was nearly complete at the time of his death.

King's visit to Yosemite in 1860, the letters he wrote about its scenic wonders to the *Boston Transcript*, and his environmental speeches helped the country realize that Yosemite should be preserved for public appreciation rather than sacrificed for private gain. In fact, "such was his fame and influence that [his] letters had a wide audience in the East with a substantial effect upon Yosemite's destiny." In 1864, Frederick Law Olmsted, the nation's most famous landscape architect, developer of New York City's Central Park, and a former associate of the Sanitary Commission, helped convince the United States Congress and President Lincoln, even in the midst of the Civil War, to grant the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees to the state for preservation.



Courtesy of the California State Library

The mining town of Columbia, California, in 1856, one of the many places where King later spoke for the Union and the sanitary commission.



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As a dedicated clergyman, King did much to spread faith in Unitarianism in the relatively raw, unchurched mining society of California at a time when the general population hungered more for gold than for God. King's crowning achievement was the long-awaited construction of the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco. Built according to King's suggestions, the church is an impressive Gothic structure capable of seating 1,500 parishioners. King dedicated the church on January 10, 1864.

Two months after the dedication, King died from a combination of diphtheria and pneumonia. He was thirty-nine years old.

The March 5 *Alta California* devoted most of its extensive front page to King's death. The *San Francisco Bulletin* printed his friend Bret Harte's grieving tribute within the context of the Civil War:

Came the Relief. What, Sentry, ho!
How passed the night through the long waking?
Cold, cheerless, dark, as may befit
The hour before dawn is breaking.

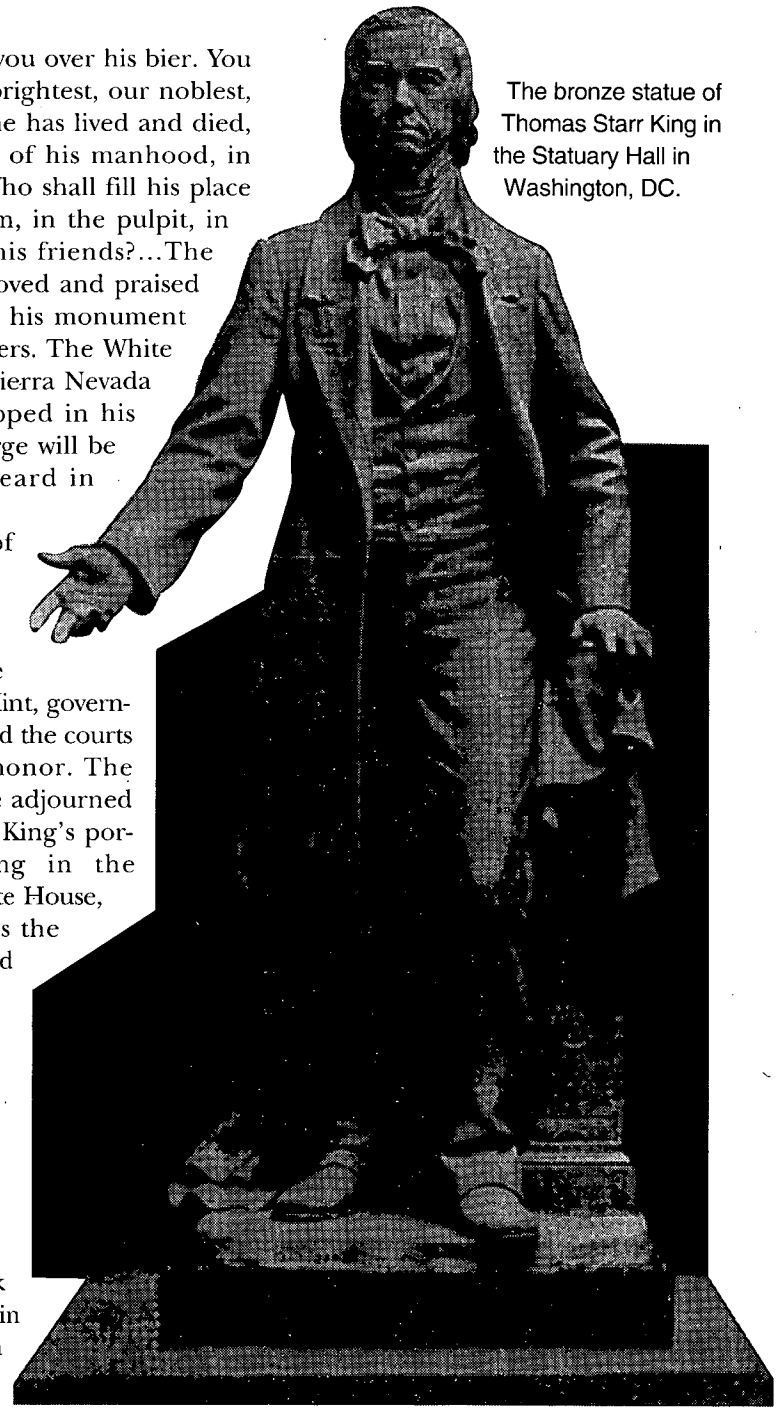
No sight or sound? No, nothing save
the plover from the marshes calling
And, in yon Western sky, about
An hour ago, a Star was falling.

A Star? There's nothing strange in that.
No, nothing; but, above the thicket,
Somehow it seemed to me that God
Somewhere had just relieved a Picket.

Also on March 5, Henry Bellows, who continued his friend's sanitary commission work in California, sent a telegram to the people of California from New York City. He said, "The sad tidings of today have broken our hearts. Thousands here will weep with you over his bier. You have had our brightest, our noblest, our best, and he has lived and died, in the fullness of his manhood, in your service. Who shall fill his place on the platform, in the pulpit, in the hearts of his friends?...The mountains he loved and praised are henceforth his monument and his mourners. The White Hills and the Sierra Nevada are today wrapped in his shroud. His dirge will be perpetually heard in their forests."

As news of King's death spread in California, businesses, the United States Mint, government offices, and the courts closed in his honor. The state legislature adjourned for three days. King's portrait was hung in the Sacramento State House, and resolutions the legislature passed described him as "the man whose matchless oratory saved California for the Union."

A mountain in Yosemite National Park and a redwood in the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees were named for King, and in 1892 the Starr King Monument Commission donated to San Francisco a statue of King sculpted by Daniel Chester French; it still stands in Golden Gate Park. Finally, in 1927, the state legislature selected King and Father Junípero Serra to represent California in the National Statuary Hall in the capitol in Washington, DC. Unveiled in 1931, King's bronze statue was the work of sculptor Haig Patigian.



The bronze statue of Thomas Starr King in the Statuary Hall in Washington, DC.

Courtesy of the California State Library

While the nation made war upon itself, California greatly benefited from King's talent, energy, and vision, if only for four momentous years. Yet, that was sufficient to create his reputation as "one of the best known and most beloved men on the Pacific Coast." Historian Kevin Starr claimed King is second only to Lincoln in California history as a martyr for the Union. Like Lincoln, King was willing to risk his life for an uncompromising crusade to preserve the nation. In Starr King, California truly had found a man to match the majesty of its mountains and the challenge of the Civil War.



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# Wildcat Sam

## A Cowboy Curiosity

By DIANA ALLEN KOURIS

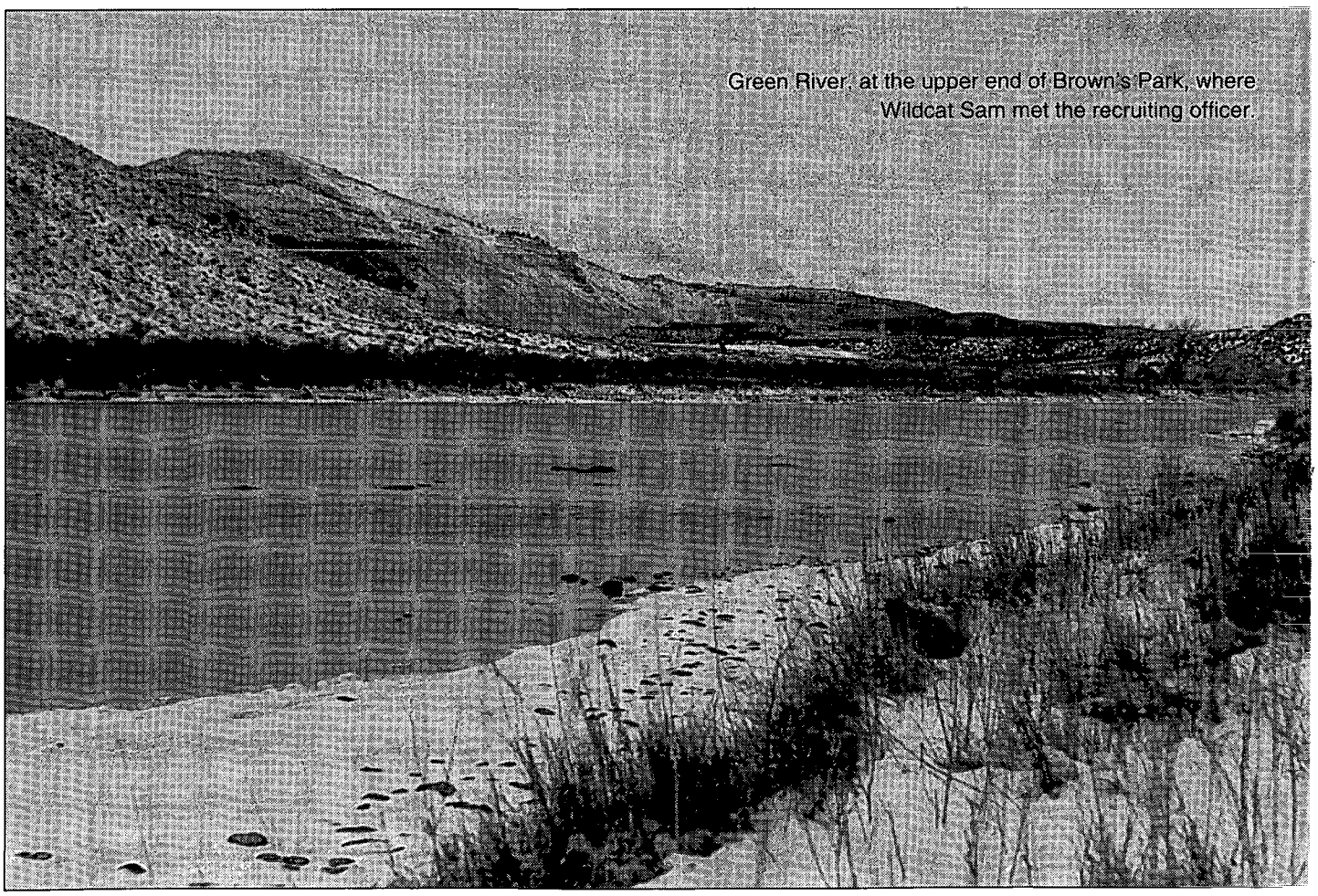
Everyone noticed when Gus "Wildcat Sam" Cave and his father, John "Rattlesnake Jack" Cave, arrived in Brown's Park, Utah, just after the United States entered World War I in 1917. The pair sauntered along the road with a team of mules, two saddle horses, a hand cart, and an old automobile chassis converted into a wagon. They set up camp along the Green River, preparing to pan for gold, then called on their closest neighbors, ranchers C.M. and Nina Taylor and their teenage son, a brown-haired, handsome lad named Jesse.

Brown's Park had attracted all sorts of characters, from outlaws to scholars, through the years. The Taylors had known many of them, but they decided Wildcat Sam "beat all."

Rattlesnake Jack was a kindly fellow, clean-shaven and around seventy. His tall son, in his late thirties, was the most unusual human being the Taylors had ever encountered. Wildcat Sam could have been good-looking, young Jesse concluded, if not for his long, scraggly black whiskers and an oozing wad of tobacco crammed into his cheek. His knees poked out from holes in what Jesse guessed to be a layer of three or four pairs of pants, while his huge feet clonked about in a pair of iron shoes, size twelve. The tops of the shoes were leather, but the sides and soles were made of iron.

As Jesse got better acquainted with Wildcat, the two became friends. Jesse learned that although

Author's Collection



Green River, at the upper end of Brown's Park, where Wildcat Sam met the recruiting officer.



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Wildcat used a six-shooter, he always carried a rifle with just one shell, which he said he was "savin' for the recruitin' officer."

Wildcat explained he got his nickname in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. One morning he was on his way to ride a rank horse, when he stepped from the livery barn and noticed a cat. He claimed he picked up the cat, and when he climbed on the bronc, he grabbed the cat by the tail and used him for a quirt. He said first the yowling cat dug deeply into the horse's flank, sending the bronc into a frenzy. With the horse bucking wildly, he swung the cat in a big circle and brought him down across the horse's shoulders. Rubbing his hands together he laughed and said, "With that cat scratchin' and that bronc kickin', I had a helluva ride! Everybody called me 'Wildcat Sam' after that."

THE FIRST FALL after their arrival, C.M. Taylor hired Wildcat Sam to cut cedar posts to riprap his large irrigation ditch to keep the sides from washing. But Wildcat never chopped many trees. Instead, he often looked for a warm, out-of-sight place in the cedars where he could stretch out and peek through the branches to watch for the boss. Jesse and his dad learned quickly that Wildcat wasn't worth much as a worker, but he was always good for a chuckle.

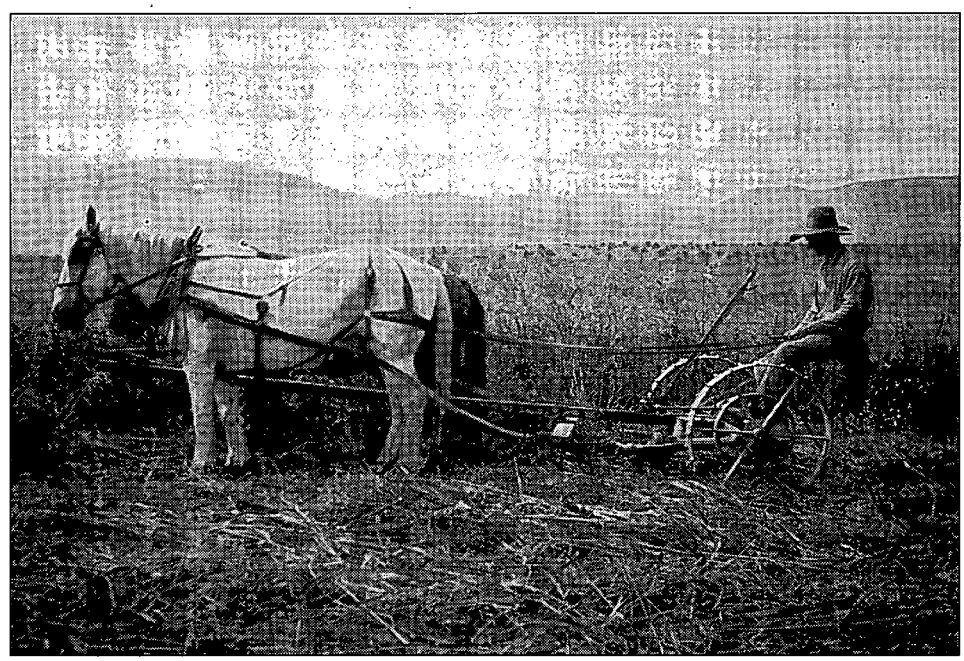
Occasionally Jesse saw Wildcat put his iron shoes to good use by ramming his foot between objects needing a brace, until a suitable device could be substituted. Once, while helping neighbor Frank Myers load a rowboat into a wagon, he used his foot to hold up the boat. The boat was apparently a bit too heavy and caused the shoe to crack. The two men made a trip to the shop and with a couple strips of iron and some rivets they repaired the break to Wildcat's satisfaction.

Eventually, Wildcat bought an old Montana saddle from C.M. Taylor and used it on his little iron-gray mare, Jyperina. The saddle was oddly shaped, having a tall horn, no swell, and oversize stirrups. He carried his bedroll in front of the saddle and called it his "bucking roll." The tall man perched atop the tiny mare, wearing his shoes of iron, was a spectacle.

Wildcat's evening escapades frequently entertained the Taylors. A large jackrabbit lived in the sand knolls across the river from the Taylor house. Often, about sunset, the family would spot the jackrabbit hightailing it through the brush with Wildcat and Jyperina in hot pursuit. Wildcat would yank out his pistol and fire repeatedly as the trio raced through the sagebrush and across the swells and gullies. The dodging rabbit would circle, pick up speed, and whiz back across the countryside with Jyperina digging her hooves in and throwing sand, struggling to stay on his trail. Night after night the Taylors laughed as they watched the old rabbit dart away to safety and, once again, win the game. Jesse suspected Wildcat was more interested in the caper than a rabbit hide.

One afternoon Wildcat and Jesse each took a chunk of Horseshoe chewing tobacco and went to run a few wild horses north of Brown's Park in Clay Basin. They found a herd of flashy Indian ponies and were soon in the middle of the bolting horses on a dead run, jumping sagebrush and dodging juniper trees. Wildcat made it to the lead. Running off a ridge at full speed, Jyperina suddenly stepped in a hole and tumbled end over end, throwing Wildcat head first into the brush.

Jesse slowed his horse and trotted through the dust to see if Wildcat was injured. By then Wildcat was on his feet and gathering up the mare's reins. He looked up at Jesse and



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Jesse Taylor works in the hayfield where Wildcat Sam once worked.

*One morning he was on his way to ride a rank horse, when he stepped from the livery barn and noticed a cat. He claimed he picked up the cat, and when he climbed on the bronc, he grabbed the cat by the tail and used him for a quirt. He said first the yowling cat dug deeply into the horse's flank, sending the bronc into a frenzy.*



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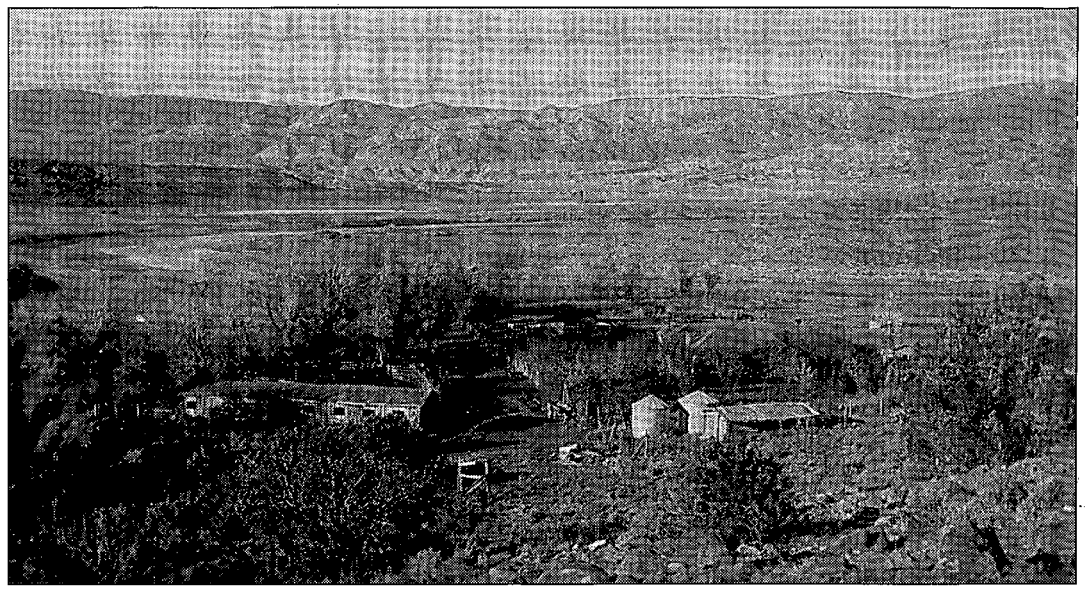
said, "If it hadn't've been for that tarpaulin, I'd've felt the effects of that saddle!"

Although the commotion turned the herd of horses, the two decided to give up the chase for that day. Instead, they rode to Mountain Home Spring to spend the night. As daylight faded, Jesse and Wildcat spotted two small fires flickering in the distance. Campfires had become a familiar sight around Brown's Park. Jesse's father had warned him to be cautious, figuring they were probably the campsites of "slackers," men avoiding the army.

Suddenly Wildcat bolted upright and grabbed his rifle. He quickly set it butt first on the ground and put his ear to the barrel. "I can hear a woman screamin'," he whispered. "I think somebody's fell into one of them old mine shafts."

Jesse was feeling uneasy when he put his ear to the barrel. He was skeptical, but with nightfall closing in, he wasn't so sure. Maybe he did hear something.

Startling Jesse, Wildcat grabbed the rifle and swung it toward a shad-



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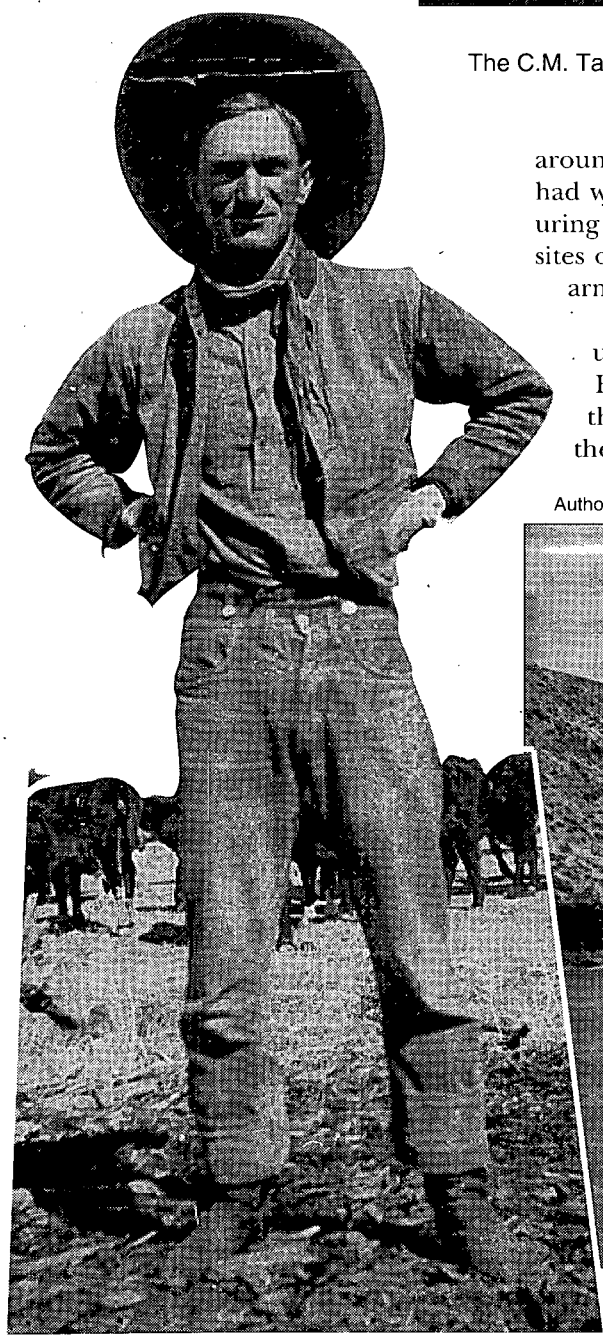
The C.M. Taylor Ranch in the 1930s. The sand hills where Wildcat Sam frequently chased a jackrabbit appear across the Green River.



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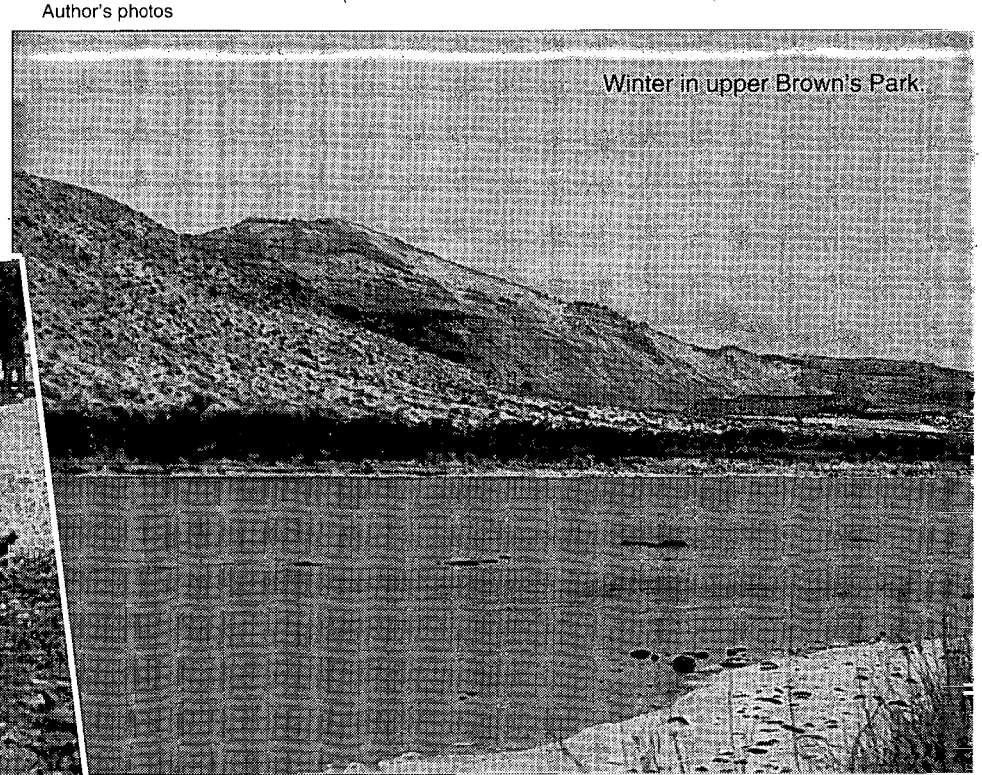

Winter in upper Brown's Park.

Wildcat Sam's friend Jesse Taylor in 1923.



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owy growth of aspens. "Is that a pair of legs up there by that tree?" he asked.

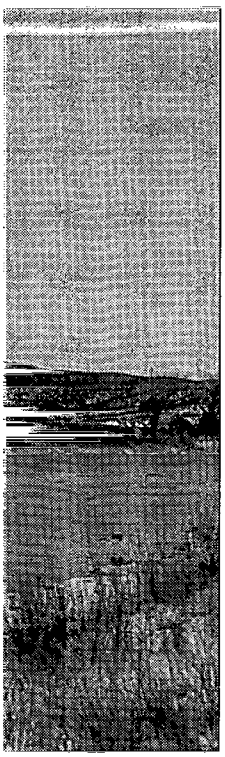
"I don't think so," Jesse answered.

"Well, if I knowed it was, I'd just guess at the rest of him!"

Although Jesse barely slept during the night, it was uneventful. Morning arrived and Wildcat said he was sure relieved he didn't have to waste his one reserved rifle shell.

In the spring of 1918, Wildcat got work trailing a large herd of Hereford cattle for John and Bessie Roberts from the stockyards in Rock Springs to Brown's Park. Wildcat had often bragged that he had not had a bath in seven years and was in no hurry to take one. After being on the trail with Wildcat for a while, some other drovers understandably decided they were going to see that he had a good scrubbing. They secretly planned to dunk Wildcat when they made it with the herd to the Green River.

TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE, on the flat just above the river, Wildcat abruptly spun Jyperina around. He nonchalantly hollered that he was heading back to camp as he loped away. The men were disappointed that their plan failed. According to Jesse, they decided Wildcat must have "got wind that he was going to get wet."



That summer Wildcat went to work for longtime Brown's Park resident Albert Williams, an aging black man. Albert leased some hay ground from C.M. Taylor for half the crop. Wildcat was some help in the hayfield, and he usually slept outside in his bedroll.

Early one morning Wildcat was still sleeping when Albert walked past his nest, just as one of his legs stretched from beneath the blankets. Later that day when C.M. and Jesse Taylor stopped by, Albert shook his head in disbelief and muttered, "I believe that man *hasn't* had no bath in seven years. I seen his bare leg stickin' out from under the blankets this mornin' and it was a regular elephant pelt."

A recruiting officer eventually found Wildcat. They met face to face on horseback in the middle of the river one afternoon. They spoke a few minutes, then parted without a shot fired. When Wildcat rode Jyperina out of the river and up to his young friend Jesse, he was sullen. He had just found out, to his dismay, that the army had not a single use for him.

Wildcat and his father didn't get rich but they did find a little gold in the four years they stayed around Brown's Park. They traveled north and ended up in Wyoming in Hot Springs County. There, in 1928, lightning struck the younger man and killed him instantly. Possibly those size twelve iron shoes beckoned the fiery bolt that brought an end to Wildcat Sam.

Author's Collection

C.M. and Nina Taylor about 1938. Of all the characters they ever knew, they decided Wildcat Sam "beat all."



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# Sherman and

By Robi

The United States store-ship *Lexington,* almost 200 days out of New York via Cape Horn, dropped anchor in Monterey Bay, January 26, 1847. She carried 113 United States Army soldiers and five officers of Company F, Third Artillery, all dispatched to the remote area to counter the Spanish influence in California. One young lieutenant hung on the rail to glimpse his first view of his new post, but he could not hurry ashore with the rest of the contingent, as he was the quartermaster and had much work to do.

Almost twenty-seven years old, William Tecumseh Sherman must have wondered what unfortunate fate brought him to the little outpost of Monterey, when so many of his fellow West Pointers were making their military reputations in the battles of the Mexican War far to the

Photo Courtesy Monterey County Historical Society

The old customhouse where young Lieutenant William Tecumseh Sherman made his home upon arriving in Monterey.



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# Old Monterey

ennock

south. "Cump," as his friends called him, could not see fifteen years into the future when the Civil War would tear the United States apart and bring him military glory. For now, Sherman could only speculate what his sojourn would bring.

The *Lexington* was almost seven days late entering Monterey Bay due to a navigational error. In his *Memoirs*, Sherman called it "one of those accidents so provoking after a long and tedious voyage." When the miscalculation was discovered, the *Lexington* was well north of Monterey Bay. The ship came about to head south, but encountered a typical winter storm blowing in from the southeast and was thus kept out of anchorage for another few days. After such a lengthy voyage from New York, with stops in Rio de Janeiro and Santiago, the proximity of Monterey must have been tantalizing indeed, and Sherman was impatient to gain the shore.

Sherman's first glimpse of Monterey came as the ship finally neared port after the southeast wind swung to the northwest. He saw "the high mountains about Santa Cruz, the low beach of the Salinas, and the strongly-marked ridge terminating in the sea in a point of dark pine trees. Then the line of whitewashed houses of adobe, backed by the groves of dark oaks, resembling old apple trees."

*Lieutenant Henry Wise, master of the frigate Independence, which had beaten the Lexington to Monterey by a week, greeted them with stirring news. An insurrection had broken out among the Californians, General Stephen Watts Kearny had fought them at San Pasqual, guerrillas were everywhere in the countryside, and immediate action could be expected.*

The troops did not land immediately, but Lieutenant Henry Wise, master of the frigate *Independence*, which had beaten the *Lexington* to Monterey by a week, greeted them with stirring news. An insurrection had broken out among the Californians, General Stephen Watts Kearny had fought them at San Pasqual, guerrillas were everywhere in the countryside, and immediate action could be expected.

This was more like it! Sherman and the other officers threw themselves into battle preparations, as they suspected they would have a fight on their hands upon landing.

The navy had possession of the wharf and customhouse, a barracks and a blockhouse set on a hill west of town. As no American wagons or carts were available to transport supplies, Sherman secured old Mexican carts. The company of soldiers landed and marched in full dress to the blockhouse, where they soon established camp. Sherman, however, remained at a room in the customhouse, to be closer to the stores under his supervision.

Sherman's was not a light responsibility. He had brought with him $20,000 in commissary funds, $8,000 in quartermaster funds, and a six-month supply of provisions for the company. The *Lexington* had also brought a sawmill and a gristmill, which were soon operating. Long-range planning involving men and materiel was a strong suit of Sherman's during the Civil War—he learned the benefits of solid organization early and tested them in Monterey.

After the excitement of landing, nothing happened. No armed *Californios* appeared, and indeed, the threat to the American hold on


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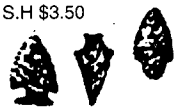
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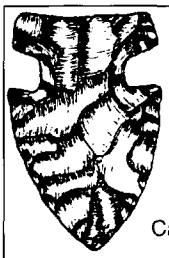
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California was all but quelled by the time Sherman arrived. Again he pondered his future at the small and distant outpost.

For a young bachelor, duty in Monterey was not undesirable, except that he scarcely could have been farther from the mainstream of his profession. The 1,000 or so people of Monterey were hospitable, as were such people as Thomas O. Larkin, the United States consul. Game of all kinds abounded, and if goods were missing from the handful of shops, plenty of other diversions were available.

The horsemanship of some of the young *Californios*, men who made their living on horseback, impressed Sherman. He recounted that the girls were very fond of dancing, "and they did dance gracefully and well. Every Sunday, regularly, we had a *baile*, or dance, and sometimes interspersed through the week."

Sherman had a sharp eye for topography and a spirit which yearned to explore. Thus, he was delighted when he and his friend, Lieutenant Edward O.C. Ord, got permission to travel to the Mission of San Juan Bautista, some three days away.

Ord and Sherman spent the first night at the ranch of a family who spoke little English, and the second night at the two-story adobe of a Señor Gomez, whose son and daughter Sherman had already met in Monterey. Their stay included a meal of rabbit, tortillas, and what Sherman thought was tomato sauce. His first large mouthful, however, proved that the sauce contained unadulterated red pepper. "It nearly killed me," Sherman said, "and I saw

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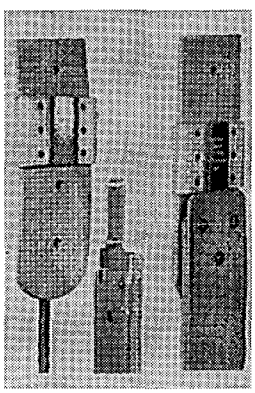
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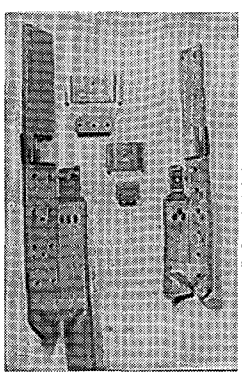
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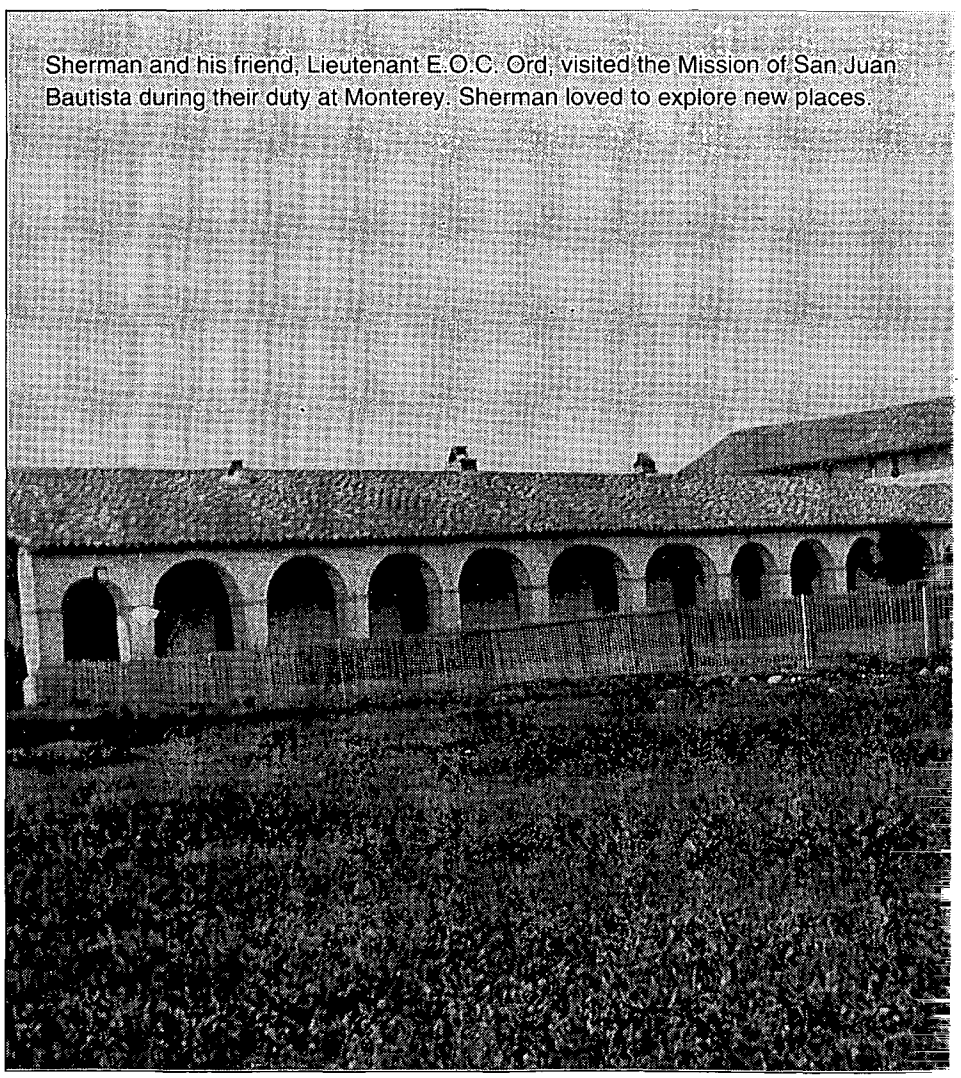
Sherman and his friend, Lieutenant E.O.C. Ord, visited the Mission of San Juan Bautista during their duty at Monterey. Sherman loved to explore new places.



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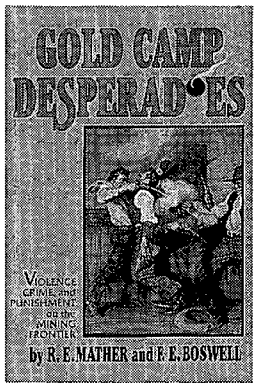
Gomez's eyes twinkle, for he saw that his share of the supper was increased. I contented myself with bits of the meat, and an abundant supply of tortillas. Ord was better case-hardened, and stood it better." The next day, the pair traveled on to San Juan Bautista, passed a pleasant Sunday there seeing the church and afternoon sports, then returned to Monterey.

During that time a quarrel between Kearny and Lieutenant Colonel John C. Frémont about who should be overall commander of the area reached a climax. Kearny visited the garrison at Monterey, and the men there regarded him as the rightful commander, although Frémont stayed at Los Angeles and called himself "governor." Sherman, as quartermaster, greatly aided Kearny' s men in replenishing their

Photo Courtesy Monterey County Historical Society

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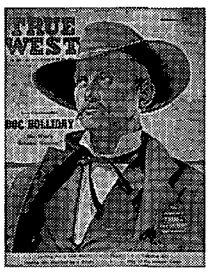


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clothing and supplies, all of which had suffered during the Battle of San Pasqual the previous December.

Frémont arrived from Los Angeles during the spring of 1847 and visited Kearny. The general left no doubt who was in charge, and Frémont retreated to a tent a mile from town. Sherman, ever the avid traveler and conversationalist, did not want to let the opportunity to meet a great, if controversial, figure in American history pass. He went to the tent, where he visited with Frémont for an hour over tea "without being much impressed by him."

Sherman's life at the Monterey outpost became routine. His quartermaster duties busied him until a replacement arrived; then Sherman reverted to his role as a company officer. The change necessitated moving from the customhouse into a tent on the hill where the company was camped.

Sherman was a frequent visitor to Thomas Larkin's house, as it served as headquarters for army activities. In the spring of 1847, Kearny announced his intention of sailing down to Los Angeles on the *Lexington*, and he asked Sherman to accompany him. Sherman went with great enthusiasm, as it was his first opportunity to visit Los Angeles. He stayed for several days, returning with a lieutenant and forty men via the land route to Monterey, a journey of some fifteen days.

By then, Sherman had moved into a small adobe house behind Larkin's. He continued to think his military career was at a standstill. "California had settled down to a condition of absolute repose," he wrote, "and we naturally repined at our fate in being so remote from the war in Mexico, where our comrades were reaping large honors."

The artillery company was still in tents out on the western hill, and Sherman's friend Ord was out there with them, building a fort for the guns the *Lexington* had brought, plus quarters for the men. The spot is today called Fort Ord.

Sherman was in Monterey three years and had adventures aplenty. An inveterate traveler, always eager to go to new locales and learn about them, he made trips to Sonoma, Sacramento, Yerba Buena, and Santa Barbara.

The spring of 1848 brought Sherman special excitement, as two Americans arrived at Monterey with gold. Sherman was asked to verify that the substance was indeed gold, which he had no trouble doing; in the early 1840s he had been in north Georgia during that area's gold days. "Still," he wrote, "we attached little importance to the fact, for gold was known to exist at San Fernando, at the south, and yet was not considered of much value."

Gold, however, revolutionized California, and Sherman later made several trips to the interior of the region and saw firsthand the frenzy that seized the land. On one trip in June 1848 Sherman went through Yerba Buena, Saucelito, San Rafael Mission, Bodega, Petaluma, and Sonoma, then across the Sacramento River and on to Sutter's Mill, arriving in time for a great Fourth of July celebration. The celebration featured plenty of food and what Sherman called a "reasonable supply of *aguardiente*." He later confessed, "All that I remember is that [Captain Joseph] Folsom [a West Point classmate of Sherman's] and I spoke for our party; others, Captain Sutter included, made speeches, and before the celebration was over Sutter was enthusiastic, and many

*The spring of 1848 brought Sherman special excitement, as two Americans arrived at Monterey with gold. Sherman was asked to verify that the substance was indeed gold, which he had no trouble doing; in the early 1840s he had been in north Georgia during that area's gold days.*



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others showed the effects of the *aguardiente.*"

Continuing to the American River, Sherman saw firsthand the effects of gold fever. When he returned to Monterey, he more easily understood the desertions of many regulars and servants who left for the goldfields.

THE END of the Mexican War in 1848 made Sherman, who stayed in Monterey until January 1850, feel even more out of the mainstream of the army. The arrival of mail steamers and visitors, including Kit Carson, were the highlights of duty, along with the exploratory trips that Sherman loved. He continued honing his geographic, topographic, and foraging skills—which would serve him well a dozen years later—but they seemed to be mere diversions at that stage of his career.

While Monterey duty had its delights, Sherman remained convinced that the world was passing him by. He eagerly boarded the steamer *Oregon* January 2, 1850, bound for New York and six months' leave. He took with him two young *Californios,* the thirteen- and eleven-year-old sons of an old Monterey family, to be educated at Georgetown College.

The years in Monterey had been interesting, but Sherman doubted his future. He shared a dinner in New York with General Winfield Scott, a hero of the Mexican War and commanding general of the army. He was startled when Scott predicted civil war for the country. "He interested me by anecdotes of my old army comrades in his recent battles around the city of Mexico, and I felt deeply the fact that our country had passed through a foreign war, that my comrades had fought great battles, and yet I had not heard a hostile shot. Of course, I thought it the last and only chance in my day, and that my career as a soldier was at an end." Cump Sherman, normally such a perceptive man, could not have been more wrong.


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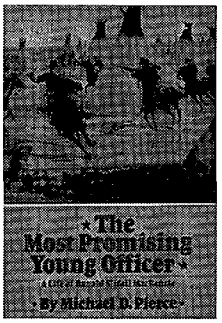


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# The Name of a Legend

By CHUCK PARSONS

Stanley Luckas, Springfield, Illinois, writes that his great-great-uncle was named Nicodemus and homesteaded in Nicodemus, Kansas. Mr. Luckas would like to know more about the town's location and history, and notes that "my family is all white."

Mr. Luckas' last statement is interesting as Nicodemus, in Graham County on the South Fork of the Solomon River about 230 miles due west of Topeka, was originally an all-black town. "Exodusters" in the late 1870s created it and two other towns to give blacks more opportunities for advancement. Benjamin Singleton and W.R. Hill were two of the leaders who encouraged blacks to leave the South and move to states or territories more favorable to them. Nicodemus is the only survivor of those three Kansas settlements.

The town was not named for the biblical character, but for a legendary slave named Nicodemus who arrived in America on a slave ship and later purchased his freedom. The town's population is small and fluctuated from 300 in 1961 to fifty-eight in 1966.

### Rags to Riches

*True West* reader Janet E. Holweettle, Diamondville, Wyoming, heard that store manager J.C. Penney opened his first store in nearby Kemmerer. Did one of the most famous names in retail merchandising actually start his business in the West?

Yes, James Cash Penney chose Kemmerer, in western Wyoming, as the site for his first store. Penney grew up on a farm near Hamilton, Missouri, but later went west for his health. He first lived in Colorado, then moved to Kemmerer.

In 1902, at the age of twenty-six, Penney started the store that would eventually become the fourth largest retailer in the United States. Penney sold goods on a cash-only basis. He made a $2,000 initial investment, and sales during his first year were $28,898. When Penney died February 12, 1971, the J.C. Penney company boasted 1,660 stores with annual sales of more than $4 billion.

### Fare Price

Stage coach travel in the West was often dirty, rough, and dangerous, but it cost money just the same. Bill Picard, Monmouth, Oregon, wants to know the price of a round-trip stage ticket in the 1880s and 1890s.

Because of the many variables involved in stage travel, it is hard to pinpoint an exact price. Many newspaper advertisements gave only departure and arrival times. Passengers had to visit the ticket office for price information.

Some examples exist, however. During Black Bart's heyday in California in the 1880s, the stage

Photos courtesy of Kenneth A. Butler

Dr. Brewster Higley's grave marker in Shawnee, Oklahoma, and a nearby historical marker describing how Higley wrote "Home on the Range."



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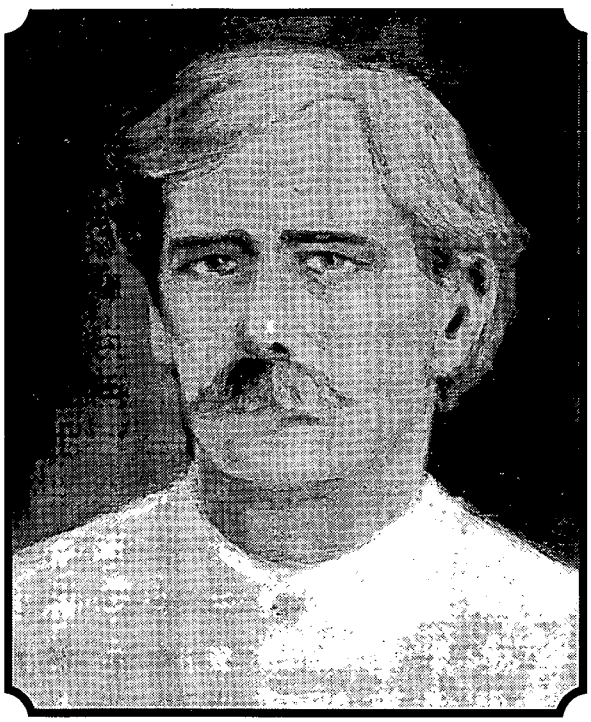

"I knew things would come to a head in Tombstone sooner or later. Finally Ike Clanton spilled the beans about how his gang planned to rub me out and the Earps, so I thought I'd tell him we already rubbed out his Old Man. That got him plenty hot."

***Doc Holliday,*** *about his argument with Ike Clanton at the Alhambra Saloon late evening of October 25, 1881*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Ike (Clanton) got his Old Man killed, you know....And I reckon I got Ike killed indirectly....That reminds me of something that we hushed up while we worked on the case. (J. D. Kinnear Stage holdup, March 15, 1881)....(Bob) Paul knew there were eight robbers that jumped the stage, and the papers reported that, then let it drop. When we caught Luther King, he mentioned three others: Harry Head, Billy Leonard, and Jim Crane. There was a good reason he didn't mention the others. He was scared to death of them. They were Curly Bill, Ike Clanton, Pete Spence and Frank Stilwell."

***Wyatt Earp,*** *reminiscing in the California desert in the year 1910*

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"He's (Wyatt Earp) left me....I'm going to kill myself. I already killed our baby....I had an abortion. It's not the first one either....I had one in Tombstone after Johnny (Behan) refused to get married...."

***Josephine Sarah Marcus Earp***
*San Diego, California. Late 1880's*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"....Lute....this is the last son of a bitchin' time your big brother is going to stick his neck out and bail your ass out of trouble. You're going to slope the hell out and never come back. Hear me?"

***Under-Sheriff Harry Woods*** *to Luther King, just before King's escape from the Tombstone Jail on March 18, 1881*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"He (Sheriff John H. Behan) had an elephantine ego, like all of his kind, in need of conquests to keep it inflated, although they try to keep their needs a secret. Among Johnny's stable were Harry Jones' wife, Kitty, which might have got him killed, and his partner (John) Dunbar's wife, Bert, a nice warm-hearted person. Good old John Dunbar didn't have the faintest inkling of what was going on, or even he might have loaded Johnny with buckshot."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Now I watched him (Wyatt Earp) mount a big bay horse and lead the cavalcade of lawmen down the street, a double barreled shotgun at the ready in his hand. Behan followed driving the wagon, with the prisoner, (Johnny Behind-The-Deuce), accompanied by several guards also in the wagon, among them Virgil Earp."

***Ted Ten Eyck,*** *about the events in Tombstone during the evening of January 14, 1881*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Then someone shot. A pistol....We stopped in our tracks and waited for somebody to yell over and tell us what was going on, if they got him, but it was quiet as hell. Then I heard another shot, this time a heavy rifle. After awhile Wyatt gave the whistle he used as his personal signal out in the country....Then he yelled, 'Come on in!'. I knew then they had got that dirty son of a bitch."

***Doc Holliday,*** *on the killing of John P. Ringo, Hotel Windsor, Denver, Colorado in the year 1885*

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from Cloverdale, California, to San Francisco sold a through ticket for $6.50. That was about eighty-five miles one way. James D. Horan, in *The Great American West,* says that a "fare through" from Portland, Oregon, to Sacramento was fifty dollars. Perhaps some of our readers have other examples of stage fares.

### Tall Texas Tale?

Many old-timers embellished stories about their antics in the Old West when retelling them to a younger generation P.E. Walter, Richmond, Indiana, recalls the claims of one such man named Ben Stalker, who supposedly rode with the Texas Rangers, punched cows with Texas cowboys, was left for dead on the trail and rescued by friendly Indians, and was driving a stage coach when twenty men robbed it. Stalker subsequently tracked the gang and recovered the stolen $12,000. Mr. Walter wants to know if Stalker's story is true.

Stalker may have done some, or all, of the things he said, but historical records and common sense do not support his claims. The records of the Texas Rangers are fairly complete, but Stalker's name does not appear in them. Furthermore, twenty men would probably not gather to rob one coach; it was not practical to have that many men and horses on the trail. Even train robbers usually operated with fewer than six men. The reason was economic—the more men, the smaller each man's cut.

Stalker's reminiscences may have been real to him, but the record simply does not substantiate his claims. Stalker died April 16, 1949.

### More on Higley

In the August 1993 *True West* I answered a question about Dr. Brewster Higley, who composed the ballad, "Home on the Range." Kenneth A. Butler, Shawnee, Oklahoma, subsequently sent some photographs concerning Higley.

The first shows Higley's grave marker in Shawnee's Fairview Cemetery. The other shows a nearby historical marker. It reads, "Dr. Brewster Higley of Indiana... wrote... ["Home on the Range"] when he lived in Kansas. The words were printed in a local paper (1873), and became a favorite song along the cattle trails. First published in 1910, the author never saw a copy nor received a cent of royalty. His last home was in Shawnee...where he died May 11, 1911."

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### Song of Sorrow

*Song of Sorrow: Massacre at Sand Creek*, by Patrick M. Mendoza. (Willow Wind Publishing Company, PO Box 6159, Denver, Colorado 80206. $10.95 paper bound.)

The sad tale of Colonel John M. Chivington's 1864 massacre of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians at Sand Creek, Colorado, is perhaps one of the most controversial tragedies in western Indian history; however, there is little new information to add to the event. In *Song of Sorrow*, author Patrick Mendoza tries to add fresh information about the massacre and its aftermath by relating the stories and feelings of the people involved. The result is a jumble of "often told facts" in the flowery style of an oral storyteller.

While Mendoza does a nice job of telling the traditional stories of the white men involved, he does not do the same for the Cheyenne and Arapaho participants. Nowhere does he deal with their lives on a personal basis, nor does he portray the lives of the Indian leaders as vividly as those of the whites. Especially lacking detail is Mendoza's scant three-paragraph account of the terrible suffering and want of the Cheyennes and Arapahos as they fled across the frigid prairie after the massacre.

Mendoza's telling of the actual battle is powerful and exciting. The remainder of the book, however, becomes a capsulization of events in which Mendoza crams such incidents as the Platte Bridge battle, the Fetterman Massacre, Black Kettle's massacre at the Washita, the protecting of the Platte River Trail, and the building of Bozeman Trail forts—all in *one* chapter.

While much of Mendoza's work reads like a novel, the short treatment of many important battles, events, and facts in Indian history gives the last quarter of *Song of Sorrow* a textbook feel. Young adults and light readers of western history may enjoy this book, but hard-core western readers may think Mendoza tried to cover too much in too short a space, cheating them of dramatic, interesting, and pertinent history

## Booknotes

*Myths and Traditions of the Crow Indians*, by Robert H. Lowie. (University of Nebraska Press, 901 North 17th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68588-0520. $9.95 paper bound.)

Crow Indian tales that anthropologist Lowie collected on a 1907 visit to the Crow reservation in Montana. First published as an anthropological paper in 1918.

*Oklahombres*, by Evett Dumas Nix. (University of Nebraska Press, 901 North 17th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0520. $12.95 paper bound.)

United States Marshal Nix's account of the battle against outlawry in Oklahoma Territory in the 1890s. Originally published in 1929.

*In Pursuit of the Nez Perces: The Nez Perce War of 1877*, compiled by Linwood Laughy. (Mountain Meadow Press, PO Box 1170, Wrangell, Alaska 99929. $12.95 paper bound.)

A new compilation offering three different perspectives of the Nez Percé war. The story is told through the writings of General Oliver O. Howard, the principal United States military commander of the war; Nez Percé leader Chief Joseph; and Duncan McDonald, son of a Hudson's Bay Fur Company executive and nephew of a Nez Percé leader, who interviewed Nez Percé refugees after the war.

*The Indian Journals, 1859–62*, by Lewis Henry Morgan. (Dover Publications, Inc., 31 East 2nd Street, Mineola, New York 11501. $10.95 paper bound.)

Gathering data on Indian kinship systems, anthropologist Morgan traveled extensively in Kansas and Nebraska from 1859 to 1862. First published in 1959, this book gives detailed accounts of Indians' social organizations and customs.


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about the massacre and its aftermath.—*Angie Irons, Ponca City, Oklahoma.*

**Seeking the True Custer**

*Archaeology, History, and Custer's Last Battle: The Bighorn Reexamined,* by Richard A. Fox, Jr. (University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73019-0445. $29.95 cloth bound.)

*Archaeology, History, and Custer's Last Battle* is the most thoughtful and methodologically sophisticated volume yet written about the Battle of the Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876. Due to the riveting personalities of George Armstrong Custer, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and other prominent men involved, many debates about the battle incorporated emotional and even bizarre theories.

Curiously, many writers assumed that the battle was "lost" by the soldiers rather than won by the Indians, and many explanations amounted to hunts for army scapegoats. Incredibly, many writers dismissed the large body of eyewitness accounts from the Lakotas and Northern Cheyennes who fought against Custer, as well as the narratives of Crow scouts who guided the Seventh Cavalry.

Employing a sophisticated analysis based on archaeology, forensic pathology, Native American oral histories, research in historical documents, cultural anthropology, an examination of military tactics, firearms analysis, studies of military unit cohesion, and an evaluation of soldiers under combat stress, Fox builds a believable scenario for the battle. His greatest contribution is correlating Indian accounts and archaeological evidence with studies of men under profound combat stress and an evaluation of the tactical precepts Custer used to position his troops. Fox's clear and readable prose lets readers follow changing circumstances as the Seventh Cavalry moves from offensive to collapse.

Western historian and Custer expert Brian Dippie once wrote that somewhere between the contrasting images of the valiant "last cavalier" and the maniacal "glory hunter," the real George Custer still awaits discovery. Certainly, Fox brings us one step closer to glimpsing the Custer that conducted the Battle of the Little Bighorn. He was, as Fox convincingly argues, a commanding officer who tried to fight the battle by the book. Custer emerges as neither a maniac nor a doomed but valiant genius, but as an officer whose command did not have the training, the morale, or even the good luck to successfully fight the furious battle they faced on June 25, 1876.

By ignoring sacrosanct Little Bighorn mythology, Fox enhances our understanding of what happened that day. *Archaeology, History, and Custer's Last Battle* restores humanity to the warriors and sol-


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diers who, like those throughout history, struggled in that most extreme crucible—combat—where there are only survivors and losers.—*Joseph C. Porter, St. Louis, Missouri.*

**Bell Ranch**

*Bell Ranch: Cattle Ranching in the Southwest, 1824–1947*, by David Remley. (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131. $39.95 cloth bound.)

The Bell Ranch straddled the Canadian River in northeastern New Mexico, a notch north of Tucumcari. It began as two Mexican grants in 1824. Following the Mexican War, the grants were divided and not until 1875 was the Bell brand registered. The Red River Valley Corporation bought the Bell Ranch in 1898. Until then, the ranch had been primarily a colonial empire, its express purpose the creation of wealth. Later, the Bell Ranch became a resource balanced with nature in order to produce beef cattle successfully throughout forthcoming generations.

The early chronicles of the Bell Ranch describe Apache strikes and capitalistic raids, all by men who plundered the firm for their selfish benefit. After the ranch gained competent and knowledgeable management, the troubles stemmed more from predictable sources. Cattle rustlers were a brief obstacle, ranchers never entirely sure if the thieves were anglos stocking their own small herds, or Hispanics taking the Hereford cattle primarily for food. A 140-mile fence encircled the outer limits of the land, but while that moderated the thefts, only time solved the problem.

The ranch endured hard fought struggles with the territorial and state legislatures and tax men. Labor disputes were common, as were cattlemen's disagreements, droughts, hard winters, disease, depressions, recessions, inflation, shipping and licensing controversies, and just dealing with the complexity of changing times. By 1947 the ranch ownership had had enough, and the ranch was liquidated.


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**Chiefs and Chief Traders**

*Chiefs and Chief Traders: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Percés, 1818-1855,* Volume 1, by Theodore Stern. (Oregon State University Press, 101 Waldo Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-6407. $33.95 cloth bound.)

Theodore Stern, professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of Oregon and a noted specialist on Indians of the Pacific Northwest, spent twenty-five years researching *Chiefs and Chief Traders.* The result is an unusual and fascinating work which actually encompasses more than the sub-title implies.

Stern used detailed records that the various masters of Fort Nez Percés kept between 1818 and 1855. He took the names of Indian leaders, primarily Cayuse, Wallawalla, Umatilla, and Nez Percé, and correlated them with people identified in genealogies that Stern and his graduate students constructed during research on the Umatilla reservation. Stern then reconstructed the nature of the "contact community"—traders and their staffs on one hand, Indian chiefs and their followers on the other—using details from company records and known information about the Indian cultures.

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*Chiefs and Chief Traders* is a well-balanced, in-depth study of the interactions between the trading posts and their Indian clients, but it also includes interesting material on intertribal relationships. Occasionally, the Indian names and genealogy are confusing, but charts and the text offer quick clarifications. Stern has documented the study well, and an extensive bibliography will help anyone wanting more information on any aspect of the subject.—*Murray L. Carroll, Anacortes, Washington.*

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# Incident at Bluff Creek

BY DAVID F. CROSBY

*Harmon pushed the outlaws hard for eighteen miles, forcing them to abandon one hundred of the mules near Clear Creek in Cooke County, Texas. Ignoring the abandoned mules, he continued the pursuit until the patrol cornered the thieves in a ravine. Trapped, the outlaws opened fire.*

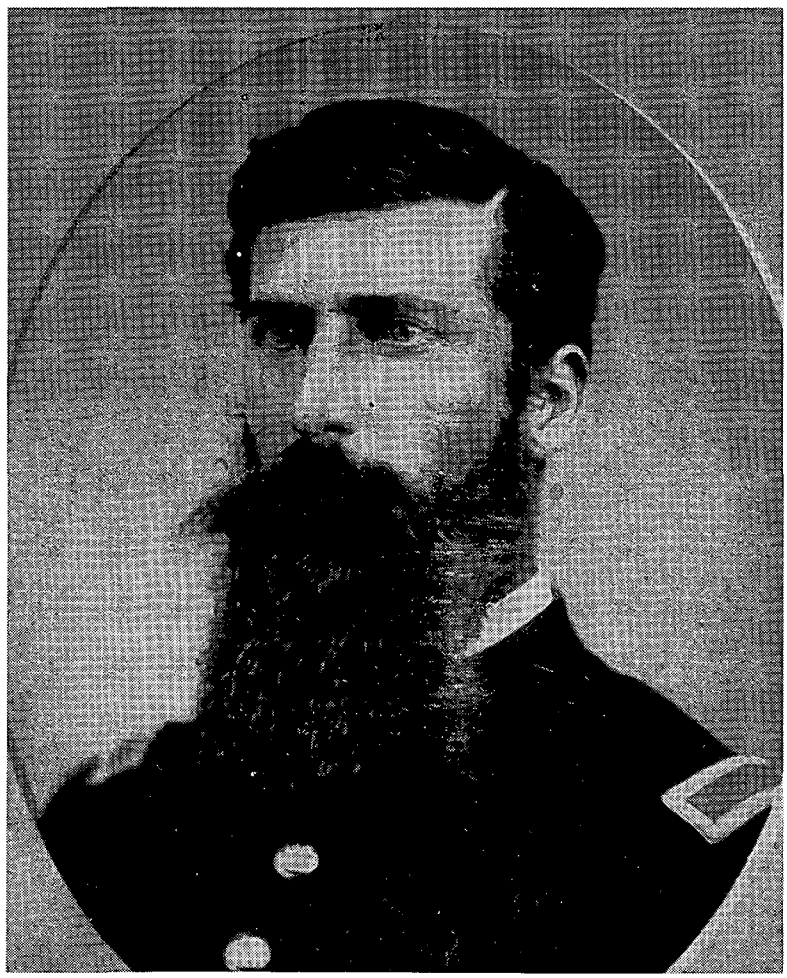
On May 6, 1870, horse thieves stole 139 mules from a government wagon train at Bluff Creek, Indian Territory, and headed for Texas with the remuda. Colonel Benjamin Grierson, commander of the Tenth Cavalry, who often said that white horse thieves and cutthroats were a greater threat to the peace of the territory than Comanches and Kiowas, ordered Second Lieutenant William R. Harmon to pursue and arrest the outlaws.

Grierson knew the assignment was difficult and dangerous. Outlaws in the territory usually outnumbered the small cavalry patrols pursuing them, and because of the delay in receiving reports and the time needed to mount a patrol, the trail was always old before pursuit could even begin. The advantage of time and distance always rode with the desperadoes.

Grierson needed a special man to succeed under such handicaps, and Harmon, despite a lackluster Civil War record, had become an excellent thief-catcher. Harmon and five "buffalo soldiers" from M Company, Tenth Cavalry, mounted their calico horses and set off in pursuit of the gang.

Harmon cut the trail and followed it relentlessly for two days. The troopers—accustomed to Comanche horse-stealing tactics—found the outlaws easy to track. Normally, Comanche horse thieves had a scout watch their rear; if he spotted a pursuing force, the Indians would use the fresh horses of the herd to out-distance and jade the single mounts of the cavalrymen. The raiding party would then scatter, ending any hope of an effective pursuit. The outlaws, either too ignorant or too arrogant, failed to guard their rear, and in Montague County, Texas, Harmon overtook the gang.

Seeing that the gang consisted of only five outlaws, Harmon pushed them hard for eighteen miles, forcing them to abandon one hundred of the mules near Clear Creek in Cooke County, Texas. Ignoring the aban-



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Lieutenant William R. Harmon, who made a reputation in the Tenth Cavalry hunting outlaws.



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doned mules, he continued the pursuit until the patrol cornered the thieves in a ravine. Trapped, the outlaws opened fire.

Numerically equal to the soldiers and in a natural defensive position, the gang had the advantage, but the training of Harmon's soldiers quickly asserted itself. In a sharp, short fight, the men killed one outlaw and captured the other four.

Harmon suspected the outlaws were driving the stolen herd toward accomplices, and he decided to interrogate his prisoners. Captain Henry Elijah Alvord, M Company's commander, was a stern disciplinarian at a time when routine punishment was nothing less than cruel. He often ordered troopers hung by their thumbs or bound and gagged all day for breaking a regulation or displeasing an officer. As might be expected, Harmon quickly learned what he wanted to know. The outlaws were expecting three accomplices to join them, and Harmon decided to wait in ambush for the rest of the gang.

THE THREE OUTLAWS rode into the meeting point with two wagons, ready to drive the stolen horses to another part of the state. Instead, they found themselves surrounded by five soldiers. Wisely, they surrendered without a fight. The patrol rounded up all but twelve of the stray animals, then marched to Fort Arbuckle, Indian Territory. There they turned over seven prisoners, 127 government mules, three horses, and two wagons to the surprised garrison—a good haul by any standard.

The Tenth Cavalry's small skirmishes with outlaws did much to bring law and order to the Southwest, but they brought little individual glory to the participants. Lieutenant Harmon, despite his reputation and experience catching horse thieves, never rose above the rank of first lieutenant. He died in July 1886.



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## INDEX OF ADVERTISERS


American Epitaph ....60
American Indian Books ....61
Australian Connection ....6
Back to Earth ....52
Barbed Wire Press ....13
Blevins ....52
Book Mart ....33-36, 53, 55, 61, 64
Collector's Corner ....59
Columbia House ....3
Commons Crafts ....52
Eagles NAR ....55
*Hunter's Frontier Times* ....62
Militaria ....55
Mountain Press ....7, 11
*Old West*, subscription ....58
Outlaws-Lawmen books ....53
Shkurkin Maps ....55
Simmons Scientific ....55
Slocum Books ....55
*Talei Publishers* ....9
Thundering Herd Buffalo Products ....6
*True West*, belt buckle ....57
*True West*, calendar ....67
Welk Studios ....10
Westernlore Press ....2
Western Publications, Back issues ....54
Western Publications, *Pawnee Bill* ....68
Women in the West ....64


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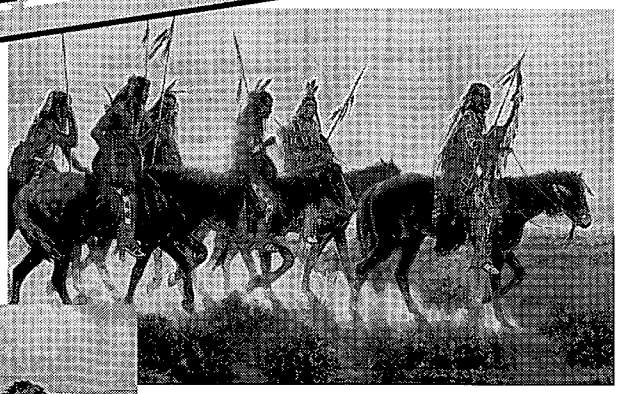

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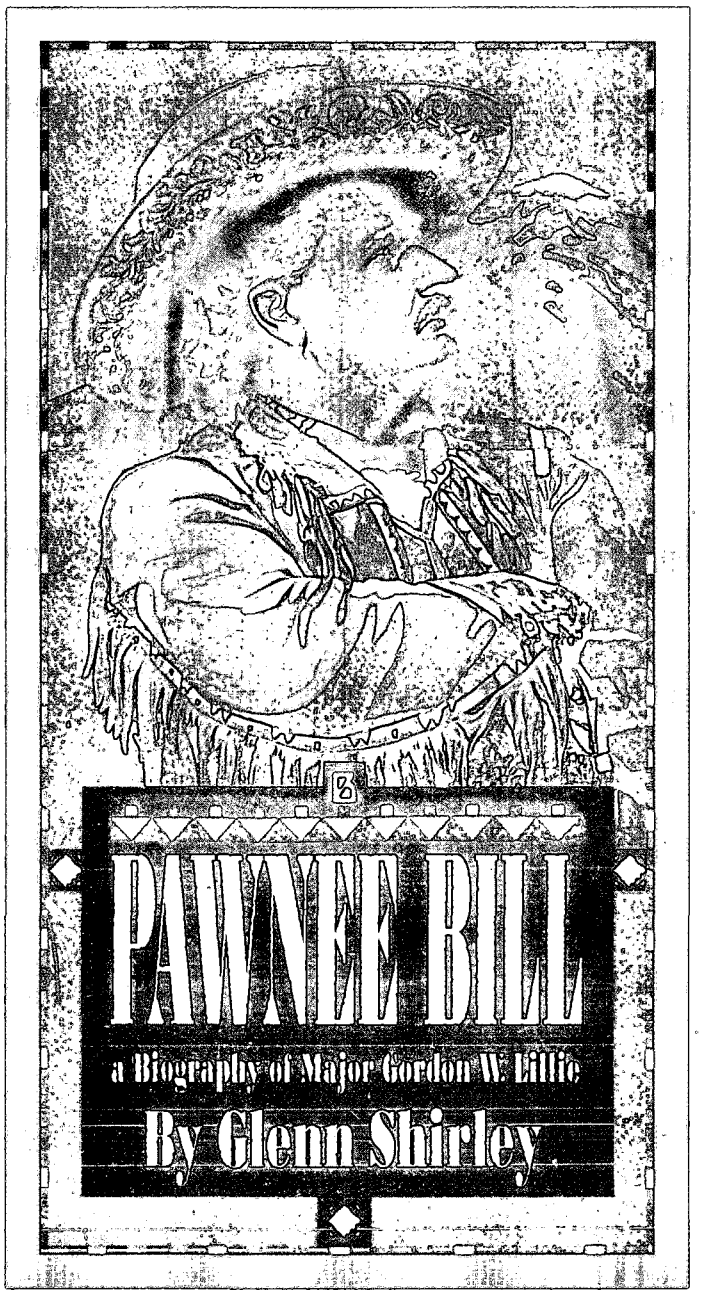


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